Inos back at work; yet to decide on Cabinet posts. » PAGE 3

Habitual offender allegedly beats up 2 men, steals car. » PAGE 6

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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China-bound man is arrested for allegedly concealing $20K

» Defendant held for bulk cash smuggling charge

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Federal agents arrested Friday at the Francisco C. Ada International Airport a man bound for Shanghai, China, who was allegedly found with $20,000 cash concealed in his hand-carried luggage.

Delin Ma, 52, a Chinese national, was taken to the U.S. District Court for the NMI on Friday afternoon to face a bulk cash smuggling charge. His job on Saipan was not specified in the report.

Ma appeared with court-appointed counsel Mark Hanson. Assistant U.S. attorney Russell Lorfing appeared for the U.S. government.

Ma told the court, through an interpreter, that he wants to hire an attorney, but he has no one specific in

See $20K on Page 4

American lobster: the new Chinese New Year delicacy

By PATRICK WHITTLE
ASSOCIATED PRESS

PORTLAND, Maine (AP)—Now on the menu in Beijing for Chinese New Year: lots and lots of American lobster.

Exports of U.S. lobster to China have rocketed in the past few years, largely to satisfy the appetites of the communist country's growing middle class, to whom a steamed, whole

See LOBSTER on Page 4

Lawmakers cautiously await court decision on handguns

By JOEL D. PINAROC
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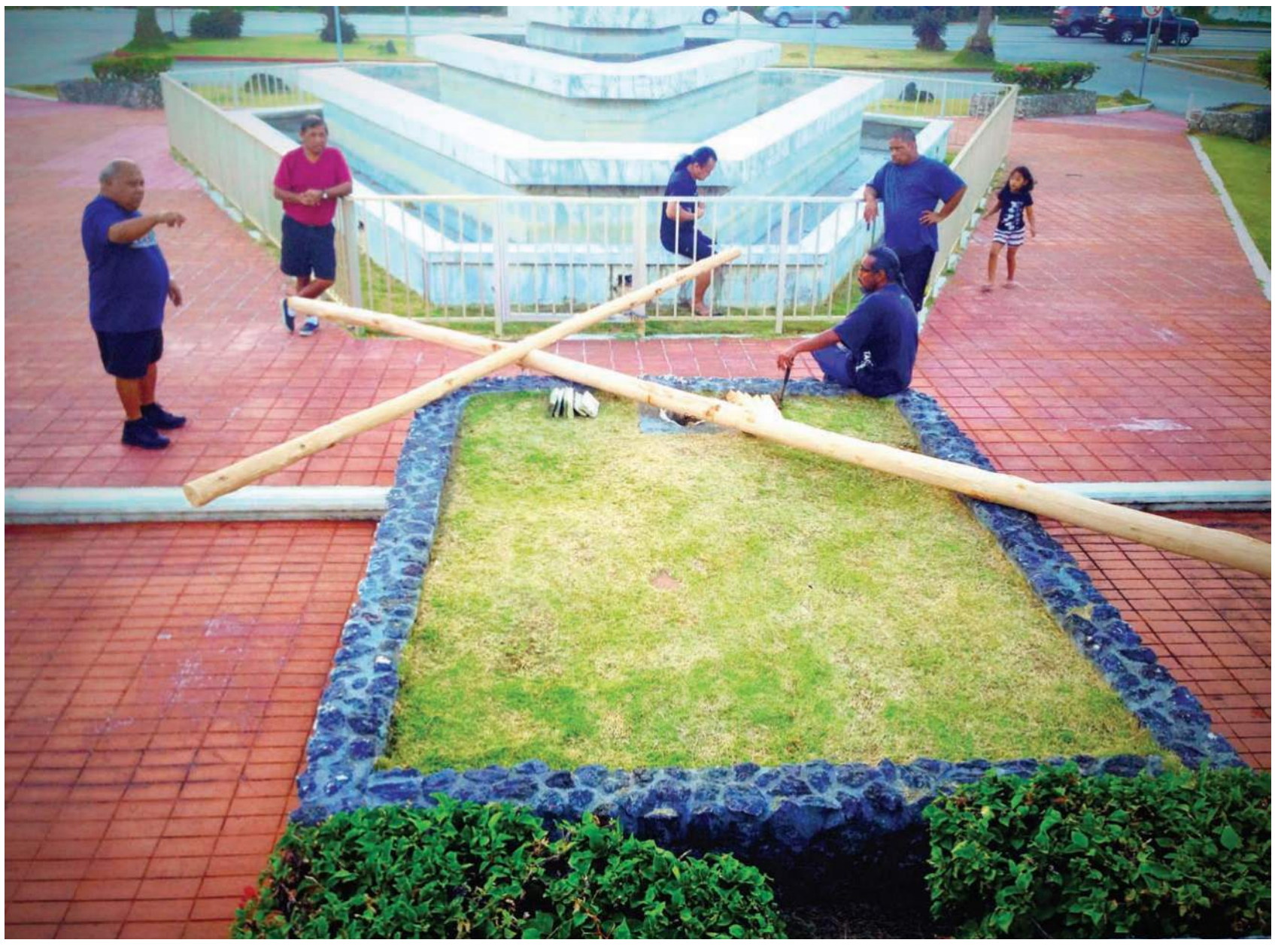
REPORTER

Lawmakers are cautiously awaiting a court decision that will decide if private ownership of handguns will be allowed in the Commonwealth.

According to Senate President Victor B. Hocog (Ind-Rota), the court decision "is a 50/50" proposition, and if the court rules in favor of handgun ownership, then lawmakers need to sit down and discuss possible bills on gun control and regulation.

"What we can do is probably propose stricter regulations, if the court decides in favor of it [handgun ownership]," Hocog said.

See LAWMAKERS on Page 4



PREPARATION FOR REPENTANCE

Volunteers discuss strategies on how to raise the giant cross that will stand in front of Mt. Carmel Cathedral starting today up to April 3 in observance of Lent. The liturgical season, which begins today, Ash Wednesday, is a time marked by fasting, abstinence, and prayers for all Catholics in commemoration of the Passion of Jesus Christ.

L.J. CASTRO

INSIDE

NATION

A train carrying more than 100 tankers of crude oil derails.

» PAGE 14

WORLD

Egypt bombs Islamic State militants in neighboring Libya.

» PAGE 16

LIFE & STYLE

Trust Helen Mirren to look regal while surrounded by rats, seat hogs and grime.

» PAGE 19

GOT A NEWS TIP?
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Local

Competitions heat up 2nd day of Pika Festival

By JAYSON CAMACHO
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REPORTER

KAMMER BEACH, Tinian—The final day of the 11th Annual Tinian Hot Pepper Festival on Sunday was no less intense, with several competitions and entertainment capping off the two-day festivities.

Activities on Feb. 15 included the beach volleyball championship round, the Estofao Pika cooking contest, a dragon boat race, tug of war, a chacha dance contest, and the hot pepper-eating contest for men.

According to Tinian Marianas Visitors Authority's Vida Borja, the top three finishers of each competition were presented with prizes.

For the beach volleyball event, Team Umang won the championship purse of $200. Team Pikaru took second place, winning $150, while Team Tasi took third and pocketed $100.

Jayson Santos won first place in the Estofao Pika cooking contest, winning the judges' hearts and taste buds with his version of chicken mixed with *donni sali*—the indigenous and potent hot pepper that the weekend festival was named after.

Santos won $150. Tina San Nicolas won second place and took home $100, while Carla Aldan took third place, winning $75.

On the waters off Kammer Beach, the dragon boat race was all brawn and strategy as participants paddled into the deep waters and back to shore. JC Café took first place, taking home $200, $150 went to Pika Punket, which took second place, and Taotao Marianas took third place and won $100.

In the tug of war tournament, the Taga Warriors took first place, winning $150, U.S. Marines took second place and earned $100, while Tachogna Boys won third place and got $75.

Borja said the U.S Marines donated their runner-up cash prize to Tinian Elementary School.

For the hot pepper-eating contest for the men, Corey San Nicolas won first place and was $150 richer for it. Scott Santos won second place and took home $100, while Jan Barcinas won third best and got $75.

In the chacha dance-off for adults, dancing their way to first place was the pair of Jose and Lorna Crus, who took home $100, while Prince Monkeya and Arsene Borja finished second and Chris King and Leonora Aldan took third.

In the booth competition, Neng's Snack Mobile won with its ornamented pepper, lemons, leaves, and various local produce displayed in their booth. The win was worth $200 for Neng's Snack Mobile.

JM Snack Mobile decorated their booth with a green hue and took second place, winning $150, while D&S Kitchen Bar won third with its bamboo-themed booth. They earned $100.

MEGA STARS DONATION CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Mega Stars Overseas Limited donates two brush cutters to the Office of the Mayor of Tinian. Photo shows, from left, special projects director Herman Allen Palacios, Tinian Mayor Joey P. San Nicolas, Mega Stars executive assistant Maxine Lam, and Felix Tang of Tinian Realty.

$151,958 more OK'd for some CUC projects

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The U.S. Department of the Interior has approved an additional funding of $151,958 that will be used by the federal court-ordered Engineering and Environmental Management Company for some stalled projects of the Commonwealth Utilities Corp.

» CNMI now satisfies $2.8M funding requirement

This DOI's authorization to proceed with the project for $151,958 and DOI's earlier authorization to proceed with $2.65 million for the CUC pipeline construction project now satisfy the CNMI's $2.8 million funding requirement under federal court orders, according to assistant attorney general Teresita J. Sablan.

Sablan, as counsel for the CNMI government, notified the U.S. District Court for the NMI on Saturday about the Office of Insular Affairs' formal notice of the award of $151,958.

Sablan said these funds would be available for the Engineering and Management Company to use for contract management and administration of stipulated order 2 projects and related project proposal.

SO2 refers to court-mandated CUC projects that include the pipeline; tank erection cleanout and testing; secondary containment; and used oil disposal, and others.

Sablan said the CNMI will not reprogram these funds without the mutual agreement of the CNMI and U.S. governments, CUC, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Pursuant to court's orders, the CNMI was required to deposit $2.8 million into the District Court's registry or file a notice of DOI's authorization to proceed for funding SO2 projects by Feb. 13, 2015. The court lately extended the deadline.

OIA's grants management specialist Keith W. Aughenbaugh sent the notice to proceed for $151,958 to CNMI Capital Improvement Project administrator Virginia Villagomez on Thursday, Feb. 13.

Tuvalu, Kiribati enact laws for responsible seabed mining

SUVA—While deep sea mining is yet to commence in the region, Pacific Island countries are proactively developing legal instruments to ensure appropriate management of their deep sea mineral resources, with particular attention to the protection of the marine environment.

Tuvalu has become the fourth Pacific country to enact specific legislation for deep sea mineral activities, alongside the Cook Islands, Fiji, and Tonga.

With technical assistance from the Secretariat of the Pacific Community, Tuvalu has set new standards, with its *Seabed Minerals Act 2014* which requires coastal communities to not only be consulted prior to the approval of mining projects within Tuvalu's waters, but also for any mining project Tuvalu sponsors in international waters.

Tuvalu's Attorney General, Ese Apinelu, said that Parliament is pleased to have contributed to this development, which will strongly enhance the sustainable management of Tuvalu's deep sea resources.

"I'm hopeful that we're witnessing the beginning of a trend that will accelerate new policies and initiatives. I'm thankful for assistance provided by the Deep Sea Minerals Project which has now equipped Tuvalu with a set of tools that will allow us to maximize the benefits of deep sea minerals for our people," Apinelu said.

A partnership between SPC and the European Union, the pioneering Deep Sea Minerals Project is assisting Pacific Island states by providing technical advice and assistance to enable them to make informed decisions about deep seabed mining.

Deep sea minerals, such as sea floor massive sulphides, cobalt-rich ferromanganese crusts and manganese nodules located in international waters can only be accessed via sponsorship of a state.

Kiribati, through its state-owned company, Marawa Research Exploration Ltd., last month signed a contract with the International Seabed Authority and, by doing so, joined Nauru and Tonga—countries that have also signed contracts for exploration in international waters.

This latest contract is for an exploration license for polymetallic nodules in the clarion clipperton fracture zone in the east Pacific.

Kiribati's Mineral Development Officer, Tebete England, thanked SPC and the EU for their assistance.

"This is a great milestone we've achieved. In addition, Kiribati is undertaking public consultation on a draft Deep Sea Mining Policy and is drafting specific deep sea minerals legislation with the assistance of the Deep Sea Minerals Project," England said.

The head of the EU Delegation for the Pacific, Ambassador Andrew Jacobs, commended the governments of Tuvalu and Kiribati for these recent achievements.

"The formulation of new legislation for Tuvalu and the issuance of an exploration license for Kiribati augurs well for the industry in the region.

"These achievements once again reflect the leading role the EU-SPC Deep Sea Minerals Project has in the sustainable management of seabed minerals on the Pacific's ocean floor and we're proud of the project in this regard," Jacobs said.

Deep sea mining has the potential to provide developing island states with much needed revenue to address development issues but this must be balanced against social and environmental considerations, SPC's Geoscience Division Director Mike Petterson said.

"SPC will continue to work with the countries to develop the legal instruments required and assist with capacity building and awareness raising programs in this fascinating, emerging area," Professor Petterson said.

Progress to improve the governance and management of their deep-sea minerals resources in accordance with international law, with particular attention to the protection of the marine environment and securing equitable financial arrangements for Pacific Island countries and their people of these 15 Pacific Island nations is among the on-ground benefits to Pacific communities to be highlighted during the EU Year for Development 2015. ***(SPC)***

SPC
The pioneering Deep Sea Minerals Project is assisting Pacific Island states by providing technical advice and assistance to enable them to make informed decisions about deep seabed mining.

Inos back at work; yet to decide on Cabinet posts

Gov. Eloy S. Inos has reported back to work and is still in the process of determining key Cabinet positions.

"The governor reported back to work sometime last week, and also today," Ivan Blanco, spokesperson for Inos, said.

Blanco said the governor "is conducting meetings with other officials" and is set to decide on the Cabinet "soon."

The islands' chief executive also has yet to name appointees to the Department Community and Cultural Affairs and Department of Public Lands, and has yet to decide on the boards of key government agencies, including the Joeten Kiyu Public Library.

The administration has already appointed Mark Rabauliman to head the Department of Commerce, Richard Seman as secretary of the Department of Lands and Natural Resources, and James Ada as Department of Public Works secretary.

Blanco said Inos is set to preside over a proclamation signing on March 2. The proclamation involved declaring March as "Development Disabilities Awareness Month."

Blanco added that Inos is "expected to be there" and will answer questions from the press.

If indeed the governor shows up at the March 2 event, that will be the first time Inos will be visible to the general public for several weeks since being confined at the Commonwealth Health Center.

On Feb. 4, Inos finally broke his silence on his noticeable absence from public view with a statement saying he is "okay."

His absence in the last few weeks due to medical concerns has triggered questions and speculations. Inos was last seen in public on Jan. 12, 2015, during the inauguration of the new administration.

"Over the last few days, there have been many questions concerning my well-being. It is only fitting that I let you know what is going on," Inos said in the statement.

According to Inos, he has been "interned at the Commonwealth Health Center for what the doctors were calling symptoms of pneumonia."

The governor, according to aides, has been doing official work while in recovery. ***(Joel D. Pinaroc)***

Propst initiates meetings to improve Precinct 1

Rep. Edwin K. Propst (Ind-Saipan) has initiated meetings with utilities officials to address community improvements in Precinct 1.

Propst and his minority party colleague, Rep. Vinson Sablan (Ind-Saipan), are set to meet with Commonwealth Utilities Corp. Power Division manager Gary Camacho regarding the lighting requirements and with Department of Public Works officials for the civil work requirements.

The two lawmakers will also be meeting with Parks and Recreation Director Eli Cabrera on the same day.

The lawmaker said some of the community improvements include several telephone pole locations and streetlights that need to be replaced. Improvements along sidewalks are also being sought.

Propst said public areas in his precinct need improvement "for the safety of residents, particularly children."

The lawmaker has also been very active in social media, where he first announced ongoing community development efforts that he personally participates in.

"Please know that I have listed some of the telephone pole locations that need replacement streetlights and will be driving around this evening around our precinct to look for more street lights that are not working," Propst, in a social media post, said.

He listed down areas needing new streetlights in his precinct including Koblerville, Koblerville Main Road, Adobu Drive (near a park for children), Magicienne Bay Avenue, As Listo Road toward Koblerville, Maguro Drive, Flame Tree Road, Fina Sisu, and Tinaktak Drive near Saipan Southern High School, among others.

The lawmaker is inviting precinct residents to inform him of damaged streetlights and other areas that need improvement.

Propst said he is using a "hands-on approach" on the improvement efforts as an effective tool to know the concerns of his community. ***(Joel D. Pinaroc)***

CAMI renewed to provide loans for persons with disabilities

The Council on Developmental Disabilities has reauthorized the Coalition for Anti-Stigma of Mental Illness in the CNMI to serve as the main community-based organization that provides people with disabilities loans at a very low interest.

The memorandum of agreement between CDD and CAMI allows the latter to continue handling the Trankilu Alternative Financing Program. The program provides loans to residents of the CNMI with disabilities for the purchase of assistive technology such as wheelchairs.

The Trankilu program provides alternative means to finance the purchase of assistive technology devices that are relied on by people with disabilities to function independently throughout their daily lives.

Council executive director Pamela Sablan said in their board meeting last Friday that board members approved the memorandum for CAMI to continue being the organization providing the loan. The memorandum is for a two-year term, from Feb. 4, 2015, to Feb. 4, 2017.

Council chair Thomas Camacho said that CAMI goes through an annual renewal with the council since CDD is a recipient of the U.S Department of Education federal grant called Alternative Financing Mechanisms Program under Title III of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998 that is administered by the Rehabilitation Services Administration.

According to Sablan, CAMI has been running the program since 2005. Prior to September 2003, the National Institute on Disability Rehabilitation and Research caned CDD as the recipient of the grant, amounting to a little over $500,000.

Loan program

CAMI program coordinator Elena Sutton said the loan program has been successful so far and has had no defaults since it was introduced.

The loans have an affordable interest rate of 7 percent.

Sutton said they work with the selected local financial lending institution, which is Bank of Saipan. People with disabilities needing a loan can go to BoS and, if they aren't approved, BoS will forward them to CAMI.

Sutton said they have some $300,000 available with BoS. So far, one applicant is now up for review. Last year CAMI had four.

"They have to be disabled before applying for the grant. BoS would require credit history or good credit score for loans, whereas if the person with disability needs the loan but has no credit history, they can come to us to apply for the loan through BoS. We will review it, depending on income," she said.

Sutton said that if the person with disability cannot pay, CAMI will be the collateral to go and collect the payments from the clients themselves.

Sutton noted that some of the loan requests depend on what assistive technology is needed. This includes training for a certain assistive technology, or modification of homes for a person with a disability. ***(Jayson Camacho)***

TINIAN CASINO GAMING CONTROL COMMISSION
Municipality of Tinian and Aguiguan
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to 1 CMC § 9910(a), the Tinian Casino Gaming Control Commission (TCGCC) hereby gives notice that it will hold a Special Meeting on Thursday, February 19, 2015, at 9:00 a.m. at the TCGCC Conference room.

AGENDA

I. **PRELIMINARY**
   a. Call to Order
   b. Roll Call
   c. Adoption of Agenda
   d. Adoption of Minutes
II. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**
III. **REPORTS**
   a. Chair's Report
   b. Executive Director's Report
IV. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**
V. **NEW BUSINESS**
   a. Management of Tinian Dynasty Hotel & Casino
   b. Suitability of Silvia Sui & Xianjun Meng as Corporate Qualifiers of Bridge Investment Group
   c. Ratification of Table Movement Requests
   d. Licensing Matters
      1) Casino Key Employee Applications
      2) Casino Employee Applications
      3) Hotel Registrations
      4) Casino Service Industry License Applications
VI. **EXECUTIVE SESSION**
VII. **MISCELLANEOUS/ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS**
VIII. **ADJOURNMENT**

[1]Public comments are limited to 30 minutes and each remark is limited to three minutes each. Everyone is welcomed to submit written comments.
[2]Pursuant to 1 CMC § 9912, the Commission may vote to meet in executive session at any time.

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BECQ to vet proposed Tinian landfill sites

By DENNIS B. CHAN
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REPORTER

Risks to Tinian's groundwater and public health have to be addressed for whatever site is identified for a new Tinian landfill, according to Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality administrator Frank Rabauliman yesterday.

He said BECQ would be meeting with the Department of Public Lands and the Tinian delegation on Thursday. The administrator hopes to discuss the identification of a possible site for a new Tinian landfill then.

"We have to understand that whatever site that we identify, there may be—if these are unlined—there may be risks to the aquifers. One of the considerations we have to take into account are what are those threats?" he said.

Because Tinian is known for its shallow groundwater, BECQ wants to make sure protection of groundwater is a top priority, as well as any other added public health risks, like outbreaks of fire on the landfill, he said.

It was earlier reported that a new site had been identified for the landfill but was still up for discussion with the U.S. military. The new site is in the eastern part of Tinian, in Pina.

The property where the old dump sits has been leased to Alter City Group as part of a proposed $360-million casino.

Yesterday, Rabauliman described the newly proposed site as a former and now abandoned quarry. But he added that because a quarry would hold a lot of coral limestone, it might pose a risk of leaching.

"You pour water in there and it's going to leach," he said. "So we need to consider that."

He added that because Tinian has its share of unexploded ordnance, an "outbreak of fire on a dump that is riddled with UXOs" would be ingredients to a public health risk.

LOBSTER

From Page 1

crustacean—flown in live from the United States—is not just a festive delicacy and a good-luck symbol but also a mark of prosperity.

And that's good news for Maine, far and away the nation's No. 1 lobster state, where the boom has put more money in the pockets of lobstermen and kept shippers and processors busy during the usually slack midwinter months.

For Stephanie Nadeau, owner of The Lobster Co., a wholesaler in Arundel, Maine, the demand has meant 14-hour nights spent stuffing wriggling lobsters into crates so they can reach China in time for the Lunar New Year, which falls on Thursday this year. She said she sends 100,000 pounds a week to China this time of year.

"There's lot of orders, lots of demand right now—it is a race to get them there for Chinese New Year," Nadeau said.

On the other side of the world, every morning at 9, the Auspicious Garden restaurant in Beijing receives 800 lobsters that have just crossed the Pacific aboard a cargo plane. In the evening, hundreds of diners fill the two-story restaurant in the gigantic Pangu Seven Stars Hotel for a nearly $80 all-you-can-eat buffet with the New England specialty as the main attraction.

Xu Daqiang, a 35-year-old businessman who was at the restaurant for the first time on a romantic date with his girlfriend, said food-safety concerns in China make him choose expensive high-class restaurants where he can find imported seafood.

Cao Lijun, a 24-year-old Shanghai resident celebrating her friend's birthday in a party of four, alluded to lobster's reputed aphrodisiac properties when she said with a half-laugh: "How to say it? It makes my husband healthier. Really, this is what we say, because it is high in proteins."

Lobsters and other foods seen as luxuries are popular at Lunar New Year and other festive occasions.

Federal grant eyed to bolster Early Head start and other improvements

By DENNIS B. CHAN
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REPORTER

The Public School System is eyeing a loan of $3 million from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to build six elementary school and kindergarten classrooms, four Early Head Start centers, and to pave elementary school parking lots on Rota and Tinian.

The proposed Rural Development program grant has a term of 10 years, interest at 3.75 percent, and annual payment of $399,840.

The Board of Education approved yesterday a preliminary application for the grant, but would also need an amendment to the fiscal year 2015 PSS budget to move forward with the project.

The board will propose this amendment to the Legislature. It would allow PSS to use a portion of their annual appropriation to pay $30,018 per month for the grant.

Federal program officer Timothy Thornburg told *Saipan Tribune* that the amendment would continue appropriations that would repay the loan across time.

He clarified that the amendment does not ask for new money but would use funds already within the PSS budget.

At their board meeting yesterday, he said USDA found they were "fully capable" for the grant after looking at their finances.

USDA area director Joseph Diego visited the board last week. According to Thornburg, Diego was "very supportive. "He really wants to work with us to do it," he said.

According to Thornburg, there is no application deadline for this loan, but that PSS would like "get it in as fast as possible."

The loan, if received, would provide an additional revenue stream to support the bolstering of the PSS Early Head Start program, which recently received some $1.2 million from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families.

This Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership grant was first reported to be an annual $940,000 for PSS, but has since jumped, according to Thornburg, as supplemental "start up" money was granted as well.

The four new Early Head start centers will be built adjacent to existing PSS Head Start centers, and serve 80 infants and toddlers.

$20K

From Page 1

mind as yet.

U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona told Ma that Hanson will be allowed to represent him as his court-appointed counsel in the matter of detention, but if he still wishes to get his own lawyer, that attorney must request to do so and inform the court.

Preliminary hearing will be on Feb. 27 at 10am.

The judge reminded Ma that if he wants to continue to have Hanson represent him, he is required to complete the financial affidavit with the probation office.

Probation officer Margarita Wonenberg told the court that Ma declined to be interviewed so there was nothing to report on his financial status or his ability to pay for an attorney.

The judge remanded Ma into the custody of the U.S. Marshal pending the detention hearing, which was scheduled for yesterday afternoon.

Special agent Michael D. Lansangan of the Department of Homeland Security-Homeland Security Investigations stated in his report that he received on Thursday, Feb. 12, an electronically generated database system notification that a subject of interest to law enforcement agencies on Saipan was scheduled to depart the CNMI on Friday, Feb. 13, aboard Sichuan Airlines flight 3U-8648.

Lansangan said he learned that the flight was scheduled to depart the Saipan airport Friday at 6:10am and fly directly to Shanghai, China with no stops in between.

Lansangan said he and another HSI special agent met with U.S. Customs and Border Protection supervisory officer Mark Layman at the airport to coordinate an outbound currency enforcement operation, to be initiated by CBP officials.

Lansangan said the intent of this operation was to inform passengers on flight 3U-8648, including the subject of the investigation, about the currency reporting laws of the U.S.

Under the currency reporting laws, a person is required to report any amount of currency $10,000 and over when traveling out of or into the U.S.

At about 5:04am Friday, Lansangan saw the subject of interest seated in the waiting area of departure gate 5 at the airport. The man was seated next to an Asian male, later identified as Ma, who was using his Chinese passport.

At 5:25am, Lansangan saw Ma walk from departure gate 5 to departure gate 4, where flight 3U-8648 was scheduled to depart.

After several minutes, Lansangan saw CBP officer Salas speaking with Ma. CBP officers assisted in communicating with Ma by a person he recognized as a POI Aviation interpreter and service representative for Chinese passengers.

At 5:45am, Lansangan saw Layman and CBP officer Salas escort Ma, the subject of interest, and another unidentified male passenger out of the jetway and back into the gate 5 waiting area.

Lansangan later saw Salas retrieve a pair of pants from a hand-carried bag in Ma's possession and shake the pair of pants out. Lansangan said he saw a white-colored envelope fall out of the pants.

Salas took another pair of pants out of Ma's luggage and discovered another white-colored envelope.

At 6:35am, Salas informed Lansangan of the findings of his currency inspection of Ma.

Salas informed Lansangan that Ma declared a little over $6,000 and a little over 1,000 Chinese RMB to him both verbally and in writing, by completing a CBP form.

Salas stated that he asked Ma at least twice verbally after he completed and signed the CBP form if that was all the currency he had.

Ma told Salas that the approximately $6,000 was all he had to declare.

Salas said that Ma initially stated that he did not know what was in the envelopes, but later admitted that it was cash.

Salas added that Ma stated the money was not his, but belonged to a person named "Zheng Xiaolong" who allegedly owned "L&M Market."

Salas said that based on his count, the amount of currency in the two envelopes totaled $20,000 and Ma had not declared any part of that amount.

CBP officers then detained Ma and seized all of the currency in his possession for further investigation and escorted him to the CBP secondary inspection area of the airport.

Lansangan said that prior to interviewing Ma at 8:15am, he reviewed the defendant's Chinese passport and learned that he was born in Fujian Province, China.

Lansangan's interview was in the presence of a Mandarin interpreter.

According to Lansangan, Ma stated that the $20,000 that was retrieved from his luggage was given to him by his boss, Shaorong Zeng, who operates LN Market. Ma said that Zeng gave him the money while inside LN Market on Feb. 12, 2015, at 7pm.

Ma stated that Zeng told him she had borrowed the money from a person in China named Maiying Xu and needed to pay back the loan.

Ma stated that Zeng told him the two envelopes contained a total of $20,000, and asked him to deliver the money to Xu at her house in Putian, China.

Ma also told Lansangan that when he was initially approached by CBP officers, he was scared to declare Zeng's $20,000 and so he only declared his own cash and currency of about $6,294 and some Chinese RMB.

Ma also stated that because he was so scared of losing Zeng's money or having it taken or stolen from him, he took the envelopes and hid them in his pants before packing them in his luggage.

Lansangan said Ma stated that no one told or instructed him not to report Zeng's money, but that he made the decision not to report it on his own.

LAWMAKERS

From Page 1

He said he is ready to sit down with colleagues in the Senate and discuss the issue.

The Commonwealth already has the CNMI Weapons Control Act in place, which only allows the ownership of rifles, not handguns.

Rep. Edwin K. Propst (Ind-Saipan) said he is not in favor of gun ownership, particularly handguns, because there is always the element of "concealment" which can make handguns dangerous.

"As a parent and resident, I don't want anyone roaming around the islands with a handgun on his waist," Propst said.

However, if the court decides to go with the Second Amendment and decide in favor of handgun ownership, Propst said lawmakers will have to propose bills to address gun ownership.

For Sen. Sixto Igisomar (R-Saipan), the court can always go "back to the basics," or refer to the original meaning of the Second Amendment regarding gun ownership.

Igisomar said the amendment was included in the Constitution to allow Americans to "bear arms" to defend themselves against foreign colonizers.

The court may possibly look into the Covenant between the Commonwealth and the U.S. government and see if the Second Amendment is also applicable to the CNMI, the senator said.

Until then, Igisomar said, lawmakers have no recourse but to wait for the court decision.

Former Senate floor leader Pete P. Reyes earlier prefiled a bill that will regulate handguns in the Commonwealth in anticipation of the U.S. District Court possibly shooting down the Commonwealth Weapons Control Act.

Reyes' Senate Bill 18-69, prefiled last Oct. 16, is a measure "to provide for the possession and management of firearms in the Commonwealth."

The Commonwealth Weapons Control Act has been challenged in the courts and Reyes said the CNMI is now faced with a difficult decision—whether to fight a costly legal battle with little or no prospect of success or move forward in conformance with the Second Amendment.

The issue of ownership of handguns gained a lot of steam following a court case filed by U.S. Navy Gulf War veteran David J. Radich and his wife, Li-Rong Radich, in 2010.

The Radich couple filed a lawsuit in federal court challenging the constitutionality of the CNMI Weapons Control Act that prohibits all residents from obtaining handguns for self-defense purposes.

The lawsuit was filed following a home invasion incident that left Li Rong with numerous injuries, which required hospitalization.

The couple, through their legal counsel, argued that the Second Amendment "guarantee[s] the individual right to possess and carry weapons in case of confrontation."

The CNMI's Office of the Attorney General recently released a statement saying that handguns are not constitutionally protected in the CNMI because they have never been used by law-abiding citizens for the purpose of self-defense.

The U.S District Court for the NMI has set a hearing on the case next month.

Funding still an issue for Tinian breakwater repair

By JAYSON CAMACHO
jayson_camacho@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

SAN JOSE, Tinian—Tinian Mayor Joey Patrick San Nicolas said funding is still a problem for the island's seaport, including its breakwater, which is in a sad state of disrepair.

According to San Nicolas, it is one of the big and long-term issues that the Tinian leadership, which includes the Tinian municipal government, the Tinian Legislative Delegation, and Tinian Municipal Council—is trying to address.

San Nicolas said they are also working with the Commonwealth Ports Authority and the U.S. military on possible options for funding.

San Nicolas said the breakwater and seaport would have to undergo several study phases to address the problem.

Between $2 million and $3 million is needed just to rehabilitate the breakwater but, according to information obtained by *Saipan Tribune*, some $45 million is actually needed to completely rebuild the breakwater.

Tinian's outer seawalls and piers help break the waves from entering into Tinian's own seaport and beach shores because the island is bereft of reefs. Fixing the breakwater would also help prevent silting on the harbor.

The severely damaged breakwater structures, built during World War II, are located about 1,000 feet away from the dock. The silting or erosion of debris and soil into the channel over the years has caused it to become shallow.

Meanwhile, San Nicolas said the Tinian reservoir project is still ongoing. The project involves the construction of a half-million-gallon water reservoir in Carolina Heights.

Former Tinian mayor Ramon Dela Cruz first initiated the reservoir project in 2010 and $936,594 has been made available by the U.S. Department of the Interior's Office of Insular Affairs.

Man gets six years in prison for slashing tires, stabbing witness

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A man who slashed the tires of a car that was parked outside a Garapan bar and then stabbed the man who witnessed it pleaded guilty yesterday and was slapped with a six-year prison term.

Manuel Daniel Sablan Jr. pleaded guilty to assault with a dangerous weapon and criminal mischief as part of a plea deal.

Superior Court Associate Judge Teresa Kim-Tenorio sentenced him to eight years in prison, all suspended except for six years, on the assault charge. He was sentenced to one year in prison, all suspended, for criminal mischief. The remaining charge of disturbing the peace was dropped.

After serving his sentence, Sablan will be placed on supervised probation for three years. He was ordered to pay a $200 fine, $25 in court costs, and $100 in probation fees.

Sablan was required to pay restitution to the victim, Leiana Ogumoro Saures, for damages to her tires in the amount of $160, and restitution to the stabbing victim, Jesse Billy Mailuw.

During his probation, Sablan is ordered to stay away from the True North Bar & Grill.

Sablan was required to undergo anger management counseling and complete any recommended treatment at the Community Guidance Center within six months of being released.

Sablan damaged Saures' front right and right rear tires on the night of Sept. 21, 2014. He then approached Mailuw with a knife and stabbed him in the chest.

Police said Mauluw was outside his workplace at Minimax Dive Shop, just north of True North, when he saw Sablan stabbing the tires of a Toyota T 100 parked in the parking lot of the bar.

Mailuw yelled at Saban, who then approached and stabbed him.

SI-NMI meeting will highlight POHL office

The Pacific Ombudsman for Humanitarian Law will be highlighted in the second quarterly program meeting offered by the Soroptimist International Northern Mariana Islands club. These program meetings are a public service that provides information regarding various non-profit organizations on Saipan that help those in need. The public is invited to attend to learn more about both organizations.

A buffet lunch will be held on Thursday, Feb. 19, at the Giovanni's Restaurant of the Hyatt Regency Saipan. Cost is $20 per person. Tickets are available by contacting Kelli McDoulett at 783-0068 or by contacting any member of SINMI.

POHL provides comprehensive victim advocacy through victim rescue, litigation, intervention, and re-integration assistance. It works collaboratively with other local and federal organizations, private and public, with the goal of restoring victims' dignity and making them whole. Through the development of best practices guidelines and policies, the organization streamlines the efficient, professional handling of their often complex and multi-layered caseload while remaining in the forefront of the legal issues facing the CNMI and the Pacific region.

Attorney Pam Brown and her staff are well qualified and experienced in providing support to people of all nationalities on Saipan. This luncheon provides an opportunity to find out more about the services and mission of POHL, who it helps, and the type of help it offers.

For more information on Soroptimist International of Northern Mariana Islands club, e-mail sinorthernmarianaislands@soroptimist.net or call 287-9395. ***(SI-NMI)***

ARCTIC CIRCLE AIR CO.

ANNUAL STOCKHOLDERS MEETING

TO BE HELD AT COMPANY HEADQUARTERS,
INTERNATIONAL TERMINAL LANE,
SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT.

DATE: FEBRUARY 26, 2015 AT 10:00 A.M.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CALL 288-8877

Introducing...

New Way To Stay in USA

Starting February 18, the U.S. Government is offering a new way to stay in the U.S.A. to aliens who are out-of-status in the C.N.M.I. It's called **"Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals" (DACA)**.

With DACA, you are allowed to...

1. stay in the U.S. for three or more years without fear of deportation,
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4. travel outside the U.S. with special permission under special emergency circumstances, AND
5. get a social security card, which allows you to open a bank account, apply for a driver's license, and much more!

You may qualify for DACA, if you...

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BKX attorneys are experts in U.S. immigration law. And, they have successfully petitioned for DACA for many young clients under a similar program in Guam.
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Email: Ladd.Baumann@baumannguam.com • Email: Nelson.Xu@baumannguam.com.
Or visit: 238 Archbishop Flores St., Suite 903, DNA Bldg., Hagatna, Guam 96910.

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Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Office of the Executive Director

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
CUC-RFP-15-007

CUC POWER PLANT BUILDING LOWER ROOF REPLACEMENT AT CUC POWER PLANT NO.1, LOWER BASE, SAIPAN

The Office of the Executive Director for the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC), is soliciting competitive sealed proposals from qualified and experienced construction firms for CUC Power Plant Building Lower Roof Replacement at CUC Power Plant No.1, Lower Base, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Contractor shall provide and pay for all the labor, materials, tools, equipment, transportation , temporary construction of every nature and all other services and facilities necessary to execute, complete and deliver the work within the specified time frame.

A mandatory pre-proposal site visit is scheduled for **10:00 a.m. (ChST) on February 17, 2015** at the CUC Power Plant Administration Building in Lower Base, Saipan. All potential proposers are required to attend, to familiarize themselves with the site conditions.

The RFP package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of $100.00 for one RFP package set. The RFP package consisting of the specifications and plans for the project, will be provided in a CD or emailed to the registered email ID. Prospective Proposers for this RFP must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division by **February, 20, 2015, 10:00 a.m. (ChST)** to be considered.

One (1) original and Five (5) hard copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "CUC RFP -15- 007 CUC Power Plant Building Lower Roof Replacement at CUC Power Plant No.1" to the CUC Procurement & Supply Division, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, **no later than March 11, 2015 at 10:00 a.m. (ChST)**.

The Proposer is required to submit a copy of a valid CNMI Business license in compliance with the Contractor's Registration and Licensing Laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, upon award of the contract. The Contractor and all subcontractors will be obligated to pay wage rates not less than the current CNMI minimum wage, prevailing through the period of contract, as indicated in the web page – https://marianaslabor.net/.

A *Proposal Guarantee* of fifteen (15%) percent of the total proposal price must accompany the proposals. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check or other form acceptable to CUC. The proposal bond shall be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety or other surety acceptable to the Attorney General.

A *Payment Bond* of one hundred (100%) percent and a *Performance Bond* of one hundred (100%) percent of the total proposal price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful Proposer. The payment and performance bond shall be executed by a surety company authorized to do business in the Commonwealth or otherwise secured in a manner satisfactory to CUC, for the protection of all persons supplying labor and material to the contractor or its subcontractors for the performance of the work provided for in the contract. The bond shall be in an amount equal to one hundred percent of the price specified in the contract.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). *Proposers are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.*

Proposers are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the Proposer due to lack of information or understanding of the proposal requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a proposal or supply under the contract.

Discussions may be conducted with responsible proposers for the purpose of clarification and to ensure full understanding of, and responsiveness to solicitation requirements. Proposers shall be accorded fair and equal treatment. There shall be no disclosure of any information derived from proposals submitted by competing proposers. All responses to this RFP should take into account any and all taxes, including excise tax, which will become the obligation of the proposer awarded a contract.

This Request for Proposal does not commit CUC to the award of a contract or contracts, nor to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of proposals in anticipation of a contract. This request and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations. The contractor shall be required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from pre-registered prospective proposers and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 a.m. (ChST) on February 24, 2015** to Manny B. Sablan, Purchasing Officer via email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Richard Cano, Power Plant Manager via email address richard.cano@cucgov.org

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals for any reason and to waive any defects in said proposal, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All proposals shall become the property of CUC.

ALAN W. FLETCHER
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Officer

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION

Tel. (670) 234-6866/234-9447/234-7689/234-7670 - Fax. (670) 234-9021
Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp

NOTICE OF FUNDING AVAILABILITY OF COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT FUNDS FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2015

THIS ADVERTISEMENT IS PAID FOR BY NMHC WITH CPD FUNDS.

The Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, **through the** Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) is announcing the availability of an **estimated** $1,240,460.00 in Community Planning and Development (CPD) funds available from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. NMHC anticipates receiving an estimated amount of $868,915.00 in Community Development Block Grants (CDBG); $309,294.00 in Home Investment Partnerships (HOME); and, $62,251.00 in Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funds for Program Year (PY) 2015.

The CDBG funds, authorized under Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, may be used for a wide range of community development activities to revitalize neighborhoods, provide affordable housing, expand economic opportunities, and improve community facilities and services. However, use of these funds must meet at least one of the national objectives which include: 1) to benefit low and moderate-income families; 2) to eliminate slum or blight conditions; or 3) to meet other urgent community development needs.

The CDBG program requires a grant recipient to certify that it will minimize displacement of persons as a result of activities assisted with CDBG funds. The CNMI government does not plan on undertaking any activity which will cause displacement of person. In the event of any unforeseen displacement resulting from any CDBG funded activity, the CNMI government will comply with the requirements of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, its implementing regulation and applicable local law.

HOME funds may be used to create affordable housing through financing assistance, site acquisition or improvement, and rehabilitating existing residential dwellings as well as providing funds for new construction or purchase of a single family residential dwelling. Use of HOME funds must benefit low-income families.

ESG funds may be used to rehabilitate or convert to buildings into homeless shelters and for shelter operating expenses, supportive services and homeless prevention **and rapid re-housing** activities. Use of ESG funds must benefit the homeless.

Applications for the use of CPD funds are available for pick up at the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) located in Garapan, Saipan; San Jose Village, Tinian; and, Songsong Village, Rota, beginning January 06, 2015.

Applications must be submitted to the NMHC Offices in Garapan, Saipan (Saipan Residents); San Jose, Tinian (Tinian Residents); and, Songsong Village, Rota (Rota Residents) by **Friday, March 23, 2015, no later than 4:30 p.m. Applications submitted after March 23, 2015, will not be accepted.**

A briefing will be conducted for interested applicants and for those applicants who have picked up an application for the use of CPD funds. The briefing will address the program requirements and regulations concerning the usage of CPD funds.

The schedules for briefing are as follows: February 18, 2015, 5:00 p.m. & February 25, 2015, 5:00 p.m.

We are encouraging all non-profit, for profit, and government service providers who are providing services to people with disabilities, homeless individuals, and emergency shelter administrators and operators to attend this briefing.

For residents living on the island of Saipan, the briefing will held at the NMHC Office in Garapan; Residents living on the island of Tinian, the briefing will be held at the NMHC Office in San Jose Village; and Residents living on the island of Rota, the briefing will be held at the NMHC Office in Songsong Village.

Accommodations for disabled individuals or other non-English speaking individuals who wish to attend the briefing are available upon request by giving at least 24 hours notice prior to the meeting so that such needs can be arranged and provided. Additional inquiries, concerning the CPD program, may be directed to Ms. Zenie P. Mafnas, Deputy Corporate Director or Mr. Jacob Muna, Planning Assistant at 234-6866 or 234-7689.

/s/ Jesse S. Palacios
Corporate Director

Habitual offender allegedly beats up 2 men, steals car

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A habitual offender who admitted he was intoxicated and smoked a joint of marijuana allegedly broke into a neighbor's house in San Antonio, beat up the male neighbor and the latter's male friend, and sped off with a stolen car before crashing in As Perdido on Sunday night.

Nicolas Villanueva Cabrera, 22, was arrested on Monday morning for burglary, theft, disturbing the peace, assault and battery, and theft of vehicle.

Police said Cabrera admitted beating two men and stealing a car, saying he could not remember much because he drank three cups of vodka mixed with soda and had smoked marijuana.

At yesterday's hearing, Superior Court Associate Judge Teresa Kim-Tenorio imposed a $7,250 cash bail on Cabrera and set the preliminary hearing for Feb. 20 at 9am.

Assistant attorney general Shannon Foley appeared for the government. Assistant public defender Matthew Meyer was appointed as counsel for Cabrera.

Police detective Therese S. Kintoki stated in her report that the Department of Public Safety Central received a call on Sunday at 8:45pm from a man who reported a theft of vehicle and assault and battery incident.

Kintoki said that, according to her interview with the victim, he stated that his neighbor, Cabrera, hit the front locked door of his house, then entered and took his car keys hanging on a deadbolt on the door located next to the front door.

When he asked Cabrera what he was doing inside the house, the suspect pointed a screwdriver at him and yelled profanities at him.

The complainant followed Cabrera outside and tried to prevent him from getting into the victim's vehicle, a white 2008 Toyota Yaris with license plate ACM-487.

Cabrera punched the complainant on the left chest and left forehead. The victim tried to grab the keys out of the ignition, but the suspect hit his hand.

Cabrera then drove off, hitting a wooden fence, then backed out on the road and sped off to the main highway.

The complainant's male friend told police that he was inside the house when Cabrera barged in. The friend saw Cabrera punch the complainant. The friend said he tried to talk to Cabrera, who, however, also threatened him and punched him in the forehead.

At 8:51pm that same day, Sunday, a police officer recovered the stolen car along As Perdido Road. Police learned that Cabrera lost control of the car, causing it to slide into the tall grasses on the shoulder of the road. The officer approached the car and found that Cabrera was not in the area and the vehicle was still running and not secured. The car was towed to the victim's house.

A police officer arrested Cabrera the following day, Monday, at 7:58am.

Cabrera allegedly admitted committing the crimes and stated that he was planning to drive the car to As Perdido, Koblerville then to Pak Pak Beach where he would ditch the vehicle. He, instead, he got into an accident and walked home, leaving the car in As Perdido. He was treated in the hospital for injuries and later detained.

In September 2012, Superior Court Associate Judge David A. Wiseman slapped Cabrera with two years and six months in prison with no parole for beating up a man driving a moped, chasing another man, then robbing a woman at Pacific Islands Club in San Antonio. He was given credit for time served and was release dated from prison on July 19, 2014.

At the sentencing, Wiseman noted that the woman's life has changed as a result of Cabrera's attack as she had to undergo psychological counseling for trauma. The woman also sustained injuries to the right knee and elbow.

Cabrera was tried as a delinquent in 2005 for burglary and theft, and in 2006 again for burglary, and had one or more cases in 2009 for assault and battery and other offenses, according to court records.

Wiseman said for these crimes Cabrera only spent a few days in prison along with probations, not enough to deter him from committing future crimes.

Free class on Japanese culture

The Consular Office of Japan on Saipan will organize a class about Japanese culture. Anyone interested is requested to register by Tuesday, Feb. 24, 2015, by contacting the Saipan Register at cojsf@ag.mofa.go.jp. The class will be open to just 15 people on a first-come, first-served basis.

The class will be held Thursday, Feb. 26, 2015, from 2:30pm to 4:30pm, at the conference room of the Consular Office of Japan, second floor, Bank Hawaii Building, Mariana Heights Business Park, Puerto Rico, Saipan. ***(PR)***

Office of the Mayor
Municipality of Tinian and Aguiguan

NOTICE

This is to notify the general public that Mayor Joey P. San Nicolas will be appointing one of the following qualified individuals to serve as Commissioner on the Tinian Casino Gaming Control Commission:

DAVID M. CING
PATRICK H. SAN NICOLAS
DON A. FARREL
JOSE P. KIYOSHI
KIMBERLYN KING-HINDS

Please call Tinian Mayor's Office at 433-1800 or email ana.tinian@gmail.com should you have any questions or comments.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to 1 CMC § 9910(a), the Tinian Municipal Scholarship Board hereby gives notice that there will be a Regular Meeting on Thursday, February 19, 2015 at 4:00 p.m. at the Mayor's Conference Room, 1st floor, in San Jose Village, Tinian.

AGENDA

I. PRELIMINARY
1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Adoption of Agenda
4. Adoption of Minutes

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS[1]

III. EXECUTIVE SESSION[2]

IV. NEW BUSINESS
1. Review & Approval of spring 2015, Academic Year 2014-2015 Scholarship Applicants
2. Start amendment on current policy
3. Disbursement schedule of spring 2015 recipients

V. MISCELLANEOUS MATTER

VI. SCHEDULE OF NEXT BOARD MEETING

VII. ADJOURNMENT

/S/ JULIAN U. HOFSCHNEIDER
Chairman

[1] We ask that remarks be limited to 3 minutes each. Everyone is welcomed to submit written comments on the day of the meeting.

[2] Pursuant to 1 CMC section 9912, the Board may vote to meet in executive session at any time.

[3] Individuals with special needs requiring special accommodations, please contact TMSB office at least 48 hours prior to schedule meeting for assistance.

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Chalan Kanoa Branch — Tel.: 235-2302
Store Hours: Mon. – Sat. 8:00AM – 5:00PM
CLOSED on SUNDAYS

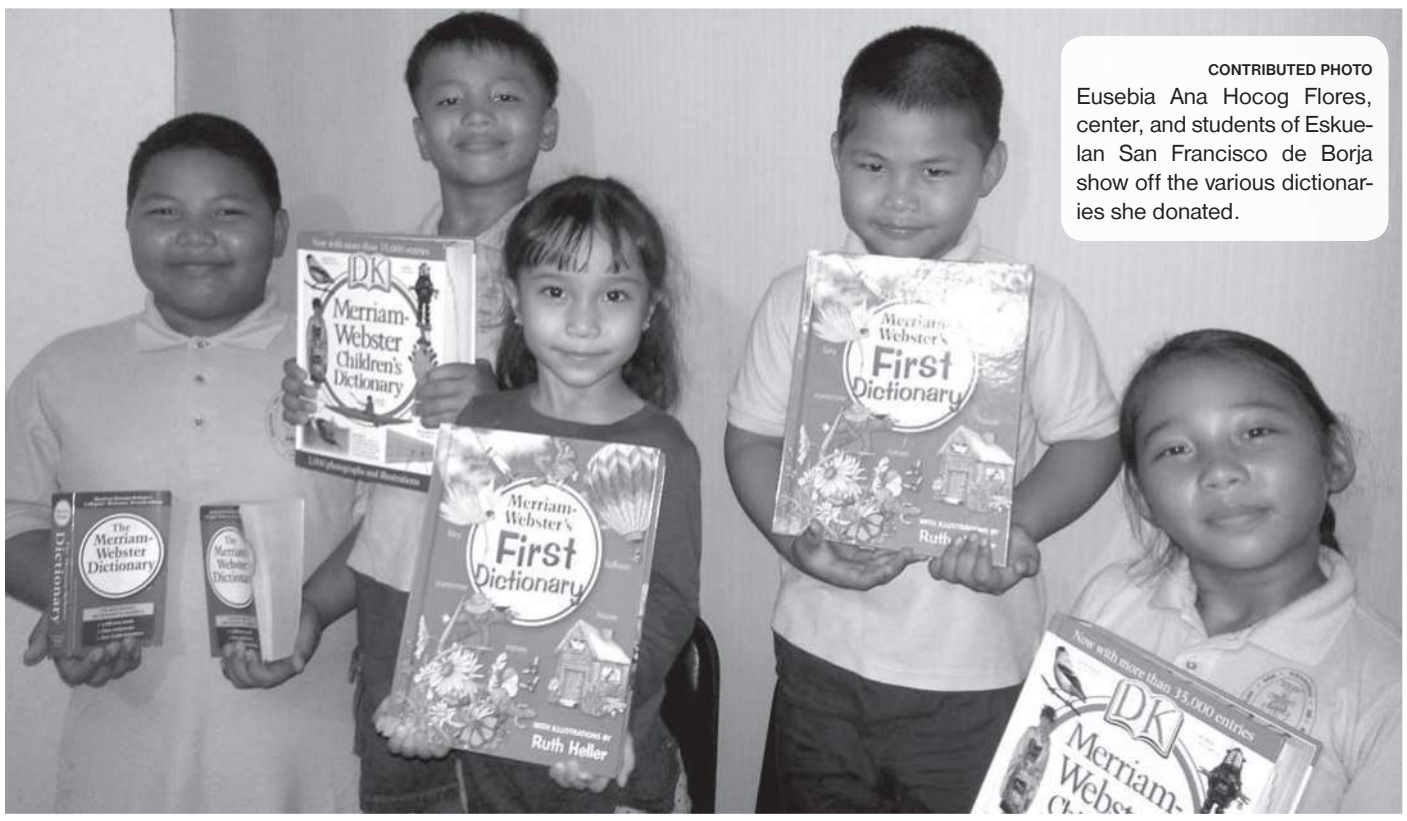
Young girl donates dictionaries to Rota school

Not too long ago, a young girl donated books to Eskuelan San Francisco de Borja to share her passion for reading.

Eusebia Ana Hocog Flores, better known to families and friends as "Sebia," was excited to make another donation, this time dictionaries.

Thanks to Sebia, the dictionary donations provided ESFDB students with a reference tool to use at school and home.

"During tough times, when schools are struggling, we have individuals and businesses out there that are willing to support. We are very fortunate that Sebia stepped up to make a generous donation that would benefit our school and the students of the Luta community," said ESFDB administrator/principal Carmen H. Atalig. "The dictionaries are a wonderful gift to each student to use at school and at home for years to come. It is a way to introduce one of ESFDB key elements: literacy. Giving a child the gift of literacy is giving them a future."



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Eusebia Ana Hocog Flores, center, and students of Eskuelan San Francisco de Borja show off the various dictionaries she donated.

"The goal of providing dictionaries to all the students in the classroom is to assist all students in becoming good writers, active readers, creative thinkers, and resourceful learners," added Atalig.

"It's been said that language is freedom and power. Children need their own dictionaries to be able to develop their writing and reading skills and become resourceful learners. Dictionaries can give all children access to information they need to be successful in school," said board president Edward C. Maratita Jr.

"Some say today's kids don't need dictionaries because they have the Internet, but some schools or students are less fortunate to have technology. Donating dictionaries to every student at ESFDB is a wonderful gift from Sebia and the reference book is timeless," added Maratita.

Student body president Tyra Reese A. Calvo said: "Thank you for the dictionary, Sebia. I love it! It doesn't slow me down like a computer. Now, I can use it in language arts class for daily seatwork and homework."

Fourth grade student Kaitlyn Balgoa said: "We don't need to borrow from our classmates and also interrupt them. Thanks to Sebia, I have my own dictionary."

Sebia is a K5 student from Harvest Christian Academy in Guam. Her proud parents are Ace and Therese Hocog Flores of Yigo, Guam. ***(ESFDB)***

NMIS students grab 2 gold in Thespians regionals

» 2 students will head for Nebraska for the national competition

Northern Marianas International School students once again excelled in the recently concluded Thespians regional competition held on Feb. 7-8, 2015.

Two students won gold medals in this school year's competition. In Thespians, the top award winners will have the opportunity to compete at the International Thespian Festival in Lincoln, Nebraska. Myka Kassandra R. Villegas and Deirdre Mae P. Rosete won gold medals in Duet Acting. They will join the CNMI team to represent the islands at the prestigious event.

Villegas also won last year's JITS Competition for duet acting with Kristine Fajardo.

NMIS coach and coordinator Katherine Barja said, "We did it again! Our hard work paid off. I would like to thank the parents, NMIS staff, and judges for all the support."

Below is the list of NMIS Thespians awards and the recipients:

DUET ACTING

- 1st Place: Myka Kassandra R. Villegas and Deirdre Mae P. Rosete
- 4th Place: Robi Jan Magat and Wang Zi Han
- 5th Place: Maverick Deniel Irang and Dondi Ferrer

MONOLOGUE

- 2nd Place: Deirdre Mae Rosete
- 4th Place: Wang Zi Han
- 5th Place: Christian Aldan

NMIS thespians regional participants and winners from right: Robi Jan Magat, Mikaela Vergara, Deirdre Mae Rosete, Myka Villegas, Jhino Valiente, Maverick Irang, Dindo Ferrer, and Thespians coach/coordinator Ms. Kathy Barja.

CRIME OF THE WEEK

Robbery, kidnapping

Crime Stoppers is seeking the public's help for a kidnapping incident that occurred at Tops Store, Dandan to Chinatown.

On Feb. 15, 2015, at about 2:20pm, DPS Central received a call for a reported robbery and kidnapping. Police learned from the victim, a local female age 41, that after shopping at the Tops Store located in Dandan village, she got into her car (blue four-door Nissan Frontier pickup truck) and proceeded to back up. A male suspect, described as tall, white complexioned, clean-cut hair, wearing camouflage pants, blue slippers, with a tattoo of a cross on his right hand, jumped into the passenger seat of the victim's car.

The suspect put a knife on the victim's neck and told her to drive. The victim drove from Tops Store in Dandan, to China Town. During transport the suspect robbed the victim of $70 cash. As they made a turn by the Aging Center near Gold's Gym, the suspect removed the knife from the victim's neck and was looking for something in the back seat. The victim managed to open the passenger door and push the suspect out of the car.

The suspect held onto the seatbelt while the car was still moving and dragged him several feet. The suspect may have injuries on both his feet as a result of the incident.

DPS and Crime Stoppers need your help. Please contact the Crime Stoppers hotline at 234-7272 should you want to remain anonymous or use our website at www.nmicrimestoppers.net Crime stoppers pays up to $1,000 for any information leading to an arrest. It pays to call. ***(Crime Stoppers)***

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Become a certified caregiver

The Ayuda Network, Inc./ Commonwealth Respite Service Program is inviting family caregivers, child and adult daycare, and respite care providers in participating in a series of trainings conducted by our partner agencies during the coming weeks in February and March of 2015.

If you are interested in becoming a certified caregiver or provider for CRSP, call Ayuda Network, Inc. at 234-7469, 989-2576, or 287-0232, or email your reservation at: ayudanet1@ayuda-cnmi.org or crsp.ayudanet@gmail.com to reserve your slot. Available slots are limited to first come, first serve and the deadline will be on or before Feb. 23, 2015.

For more information, call the Ayuda Network, Inc. or stop by at the office located in Chalan Kanoa next door to Karidat Social Services between 7:30am and 4:30pm. ***(PR)***

VFW American flag disposal program

VFW Saipan Post 3457, located on Palm Street in Garapan, announces a new program to assist the community by properly disposing of old, unserviceable American flags. It will be done in accordance with federal regulations on flag etiquette. This will be a no-cost service and flags may be dropped off at the VFW between 4pm and 10pm daily. ***(VFW)***

Military training on FDM

ASAN, Guam—The U.S. military will conduct training on the island of Farallon de Medinilla on Feb. 16-20, from 8am to 7pm. The general public—especially fishermen, commercial pilots, and marine tour operators—are advised to stay clear from the area during the dates and times indicated. The general location of the training on the island of Farallon de Medinilla will be on a 10-nautical mile radius on all quadrants. ***(PR)***

Workshop expands breadfruit's business potential

Northern Marianas College partnered with the Office of the Governor and the University of Hawaii Pacific Business Development Center to host "From Tree to Table – Breadfruit Workshop" last Friday. The workshop drew a packed audience composed of business owners, government heads, legislators, farmers, ranchers, and other community members. The discussion, led by Craig Elevitch and Kalani Souza, focused on advancing breadfruit for local and export markets.

Dr. Craig Evelitch, director of Agroforesty Net, spoke to the crowd on commercialization of breadfruit.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Leaders and presenters of the workshop pose for a photo. From left to right are Kalani Souza, Kaitu Erasito of Fiji, Patricia Coleman of NMC CREES, and Dr. Craig Evelitch.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Kalani Souza, director of the Olohana Foundation in Hawaii, sold the breadfruit initiative with his warmth, intelligence, and passion last Friday.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

CNMI department and division heads join Friday's workshop.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Dr. Craig Evelitch, director of Agroforesty Net, lets the crowd try some dried breadfruit chips.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Kalani Souza makes a point during a conversation with Northern Marianas Trade Institute president Agnes McPhetres, Joeten Kiyu Public Library executive director John Gonzales, McDonald's Saipan's Joe Ayuyu, and former senator Jovita Taimanao.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Dr. Craig Evelitch, director of Agroforesty Net, slices a piece of breadfruit at the beginning of his breadfruit flour making demonstration during the "From Tree to Table – Breadfruit Workshop" last Friday at the Northern Marianas College.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Participants of last Friday's breadfruit workshop pose for a photo.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Participants of the breadfruit workshop drew from government and private leaders and citizens.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Participants are all ears while Kalani Souza talks. Souza is director of the Olohana Foundation in Hawaii.

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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EDITORIAL

Can you rely on dietary supplements?

A controversial investigation by the New York attorney general has raised fresh questions about the ingredients in store-brand vitamins or supplements, which are taken by over half of American adults, according to a 2013 Government Accountability Office report.

The investigation, which garnered national headlines, found little of the active ingredients listed on the labels of some products sold by Walgreens, Wal-Mart, GNC and Target.

The investigation by New York Attorney General Eric T. Schneiderman reinvigorated the long-running debate over dietary supplement use and regulation. That's a positive development.

There are thousands of these products on the market. From Ginkgo biloba for memory loss to saw palmetto for prostate problems, there's an herbal, mineral or proprietary "natural" blend to address many common health concerns. In 2011, sales of dietary supplements topped $30 billion, the GAO reported.

What consumers often don't realize is that federal regulation of these products is far less rigorous than oversight of prescription drugs. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration "does not have the authority to require dietary supplements to be approved for safety and effectiveness before they enter the market ...," according to the GAO report.

In addition, the FDA mainly relies on consumer and industry reporting of so-called "adverse effects"—health concerns that have arisen among users—to identify safety problems. There are many reputable supplement manufacturers, but just because a product is "natural" is no guarantee against harm.

The New York investigation also raised concerns that in-house brands carried by trusted retailers may not necessarily be reliable.

For example, three of the six supplements tested during the investigation did not contain the active ingredients on the label. Garlic, rice and cassava were found in Wal-Mart's Spring Valley brand of St. John's wort, but no St. John's wort. The active ingredient was missing in three of the five other Spring Valley products tested.

It's important to note that reputable trade industry organizations, such as the American Botanical Council, have raised valid concerns about the type of testing done by the New York investigators. The "bar coding" method may not detect extracts of substances, for example. Nor did Schneiderman call on his home state's most pre-eminent experts. Further clarity is needed from another agency.

Congress should also take a closer look at Durbin's previous proposals for strengthening regulation. But the debate shouldn't focus exclusively on government oversight. Manufacturers and retailers need to reassure an unnerved public that their ingredient sourcing and processes deliver a product consumers can trust.

And consumers should look for products with the USP Verified Mark, the supplement version of a "Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval." Less than 1 percent of products currently have this trusted symbol. Consumers have the clout to change that.

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MARGULIES
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Tidy up the guest room. Obama's sending us a fresh batch of hostages...
WAR AUTHORITY VS. ISIS
GROUND TROOPS

Performance reviews are corporate America's curse on itself

By SAMUEL A. CULBERT
Los Angeles Times

Samuel A. Culbert, a professor in the Anderson School of Management at the University of California, Los Angeles, is coauthor, with Lawrence Rout, of Get Rid of the Performance Review! How Companies Can Stop Intimidating, Start Managing–and Focus on What Really Matters. *He wrote this for the* Los Angeles Times.

Ask most managers and employees about the corporate performance review, and the answer probably is the same: It's a pain to give, a pain to get, but a necessary part modern corporate life. It's something we just have to do.

Says who? Who says you have to take part in a corporate ritual that is as destructive as it is ubiquitous? Who says you have to do something that damages the relationship between bosses and their subordinates, that practically forces employees to be dishonest to their managers, that keeps workers from doing the best they can do, and in the end hurts the bottom line?

I like to ask defenders of the performance review two sets of simple questions:

Do you think performance reviews are objective? If so, why do you think surveys show that most employees get completely different reviews if they are rated by a second boss?

Do you believe reviews help teamwork by getting people to work together to raise the department's performance? When they invariably say yes, I ask: If you knew that only three people in your department could get a top ranking (since most companies limit the number of top grades managers can give out), would you be more or less inclined to help your colleagues succeed?

I see performance reviews as a curse on corporate America. They claim to be objective, but one person's view of another can be no more objective than a film critic's review of a movie. At the same time, they inhibit workers from speaking truth to power, for fear that their truth will come back in a review to haunt them in being labeled difficult.

Reviews impede personal growth, because what employee wants to admit weakness when that admission can be used against him or her at annual review time? They assume that everybody should be measured against the same yardsticks, when everybody is different, and that their path to success is based on their own strengths and weaknesses.

Corporations also often cite the reviews as a necessary paper trail in case an employee is fired later. But the inherent subjectivity and dishonesty of reviews more often than not serves the employee's case in a wrongful dismissal lawsuit rather than the corporate defendants'.

The problem, defenders often say, is not in the review but in the way it's done. If only. A cake made with bad flour is no tastier than the crumb of bread made with the same flour.

To be clear, I do want accountability, and I believe in the boss ultimately getting to make the final decision. But I don't believe, as the performance review would have us believe, that only one person is accountable: the employee. The boss is accountable as well, since it's the boss' job to make sure employees succeed. If the employee isn't producing results, the boss should have known enough not to give that person the assignment or done a better job helping that employee succeed.

So how do you turn things around? How do you get good management? For starters, get rid of the performance review with its boss-dominated, intimidating relationship, and its focus on what hasn't worked in the past. Instead, start the process of what I call performance previewing, which allows you to work on resource and communication problems while there's still time to get good results.

Previews are problem-solving, setting their sights on the future and what needs to happen, not on the past and who's to blame. And they don't happen only annually; they take place whenever either the boss or the subordinate believe something isn't working well.

You also change the internal politics so that boss and subordinate are an accountability team, both on the hook for producing corporate results. This gives bosses reason to create the circumstances for employees to say what they really think and what's gone awry, rather than forcing them to focus on why the employees haven't gotten the results. Give them reason to play to employee strengths and not to blindly count what employees can't do.

Finally, bosses and employees need to start having real conversations, where everybody owns what they think and there is no "truth" handed down from above. Only then can all workers feel free to say what they think without fear of being punished by their words down the road. Only then can you have true teamwork and collaboration.

When I recently asked the 62 MBA students in my leadership class—students, mind you, who have full-time professional jobs—to describe a personal experience with good or bad management, 57 of them offered the latter. It's because they are tired of a system in which bosses manage with a whip. And that whip is the performance review.

I don't pretend that taking that whip out of managers' hands is easy. I have no doubt that managers and their employees would find it all bewildering at first. But I can tell you where should start: get rid of the performance review.

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Sleepwalking issues

By JOHN S. DELROSARIO JR.
Special to the Saipan Tribune

John DelRosario Jr. is a former publisher of the Saipan Tribune *and a former secretary of the Department of Public Lands.*

A straight news story said CUC is headed into insolvency (bankruptcy) if the CNMI government doesn't pay its utility debt to the tune of $28.7 million. If it goes belly up or broke, how does it operate the utility system? This one definitely needs real time emergency declaration.

If we can't pay CUC how else do we meet FY 2016 payment to the settlement fund of $30 million, $30 million to PSS, $38 million to CHC, other departments and agencies? As these fiscal obligations skyrocket, revenue generation has gone the other way—Deep South. It pains me to even mention this reality but we might as well know it now. Linguistic appeasement isn't the answer to suppress reality. Expect heavy headwinds ahead.

■■■

President Obama delivered his facile moral equivalence of Christianity and Islam two weeks ago. I would have listened to his pretentious explanation if he had any faith. But the only faith he possesses is himself. Appalling his disconnect and wobbly verbal fire dancing, avoiding calling Muslim-inflicted atrocities across the country "terrorism."

So help me God, hope nothing else happens that leads to our national destruction over the next two years! Furthermore, Muslims are killing Christians all over the world. So do we get off our horse? Sorry, Mr. O, I still prefer reading the third book in the Holy Bible, Leviticus! The Bible is not the same as the Koran, sir! Evidently, slavery existed before the time of Christ. No, not ready to subscribe to your disoriented moral idiocy!

■■■

The echo in these tumultuous times resembles descending steps into a traditional ancestral well. You know someone's there, though unsure who it may be.

Troubling the ring in the decibels of the echo that has turned fearfully discordant. Are we headed into a huge headwind or mind numbing disaster? Is it natural or man-made? You could hear it in the calm of the night right before you retire. It sounds ominous.

■■■

In considering the FY 2016 budget, a benchmark per senatorial district should be established or money it must remit to the local treasury annually. Senatorial districts that fall short should be denied any funding until they meet their obligation. This should put the test of real leadership front and center for every taxpayer to see.

■■■

To move the CNMI we must have vision, leadership, and a genuine plan (blueprint) to follow and refine as we move along. Otherwise, we're toying with persistent failure for failing to plan.

Some 250 southwest of the NMI is southern neighbor Guam. More international flights have moved in a plus for its tourism industry. It has even included village fiestas to allow tourists to assimilate into the local community.

Whenever something goes off kilter, it revisits its plan or blueprint, refines it, and moves forward. Second-guessing a destiny is bad from the outset. This has got to change. In brief, paradigms must change!

■■■

A joint recruitment for skydivers has started in hopes of finding loose change in the blue skies of paradise. They must also identify where in the deep blue are pennies, nickels and dimes buried.

It would also try anchoring the CNMI's Air Bridge to secure it from being blown into the horizon. Strict orders were also given to find $28.7 million to pay CUC and other Cs. Rep. Roman Benavente was the latest recruit for the skydiving unit.

But the skydiving trip was aborted. Freedom Air is broke while Cape Air constantly sings "technical." Sen. Snorkel and team are fearful of being stuck upstairs all night. Don't want to miss their naptime downstairs.

■■■

In more ways than one, the deepening bankruptcy has folks on the hill stunned like frightened deer stuck in the headlights, blinded and disoriented. Magoo said it's one too many job offers where there are no vacancies.

Must we change the Steering Cabin to avoid sinking like the *Titanic* did? It's already turn belly up! So what else is there other than to memorialize internal inadequacies and royal failure? Putting a spin against the superiority of reality isn't going to change the factual fiscal crisis here.

■■■

I don't blame an all-out clamor to hide behind the cover of "protective order." With fresh tips how even reverse co-optation rolled in before the last election, some have been rewarded handsomely. Others aren't so happy leaving unable to engage babel for fear of self-incrimination. Interesting though the supersize maggots now crawling out of the filthy bag. A`saina!

■■■

Constructive policies are vital to pushing economic growth forward. So far policymakers have succeeded with cockfighting, prohibition of panty hanging in Garapan, public toilet cleanup; and other woefully irrelevant issues. Eh, try regulating betel nut chewing!

Creative ways to deny climate change

By JOHN M. CRISP
Tribune News Service

John M. Crisp, an op-ed columnist for Tribune News Service, teaches in the English Department at Del Mar College in Corpus Christi, Texas. Readers may send him email at jcrisp@delmar.edu.

Climate-change denial persists in various modes, none of which is particularly convincing.

But they don't have to be. They're successful if they raise enough doubt about the scientific consensus on climate change to encourage complacency about the future of our planet.

There's the "I-am-not-a-scientist" mode, which depends on a resigned know-nothingness to suggest that climate is too complex for an ordinary person to understand. At the same time this perspective requires the dismissal of the views of actual scientists.

The opposite of this mode of denial is the notion that humankind has always managed to come up with the ingenuity to solve the dilemmas that face us. Inherent in this way of thinking is the assumption that we have unlimited capacity to find new forms of energy as we exhaust the old ones.

And if we've caused some problems with the climate, we can solve them with geoengineering. We'll eventually discover ways to force the carbon in the atmosphere back into the ground, and we'll figure out how to shroud the earth with clouds of sulfate particles that will reflect some of the sun's radiation back into space. No problem.

Then there's the senior senator from Oklahoma, Jim Inhofe, who in January became the chair of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, whose purview includes climate.

In 2003 Inhofe questioned whether global warming is even a problem for humanity. In fact, he said, "... increases in global temperatures may have a beneficial effect on how we live our lives."

In 2012, Inhofe said, "The arrogance of people to think that we, human beings, would be able to change what He (God) is doing in the climate is to me outrageous."

In other words, how does a puny humanity develop the hubris to believe that it can do anything that could degrade the wellbeing of all Creation?

But this mode of climate-change denial is a false humility thoroughly at odds with the history of civilization. For the most part, the narrative of human progress has involved the careless exploitation and depletion of local resources and then moving on to new ones.

This system worked fine, more or less, for millennia, but now the growth of both human population and of our technological capacity has pushed us up hard against the globe's natural limits. Hardcore deniers may contend that the globe doesn't have limits, but logic suggests otherwise.

Sen. Inhofe should know this better than most. Oklahoma was at the heart of the great modern parable of humankind's capacity to affect the environment, the Dust Bowl.

We don't hear much about this period of American history these days, but for an instructive glimpse at how misguided human activity can affect the environment, consider Timothy Egan's "The Worst Hard Time."

Here's the short version: In the 19th Century, the Great Plains, a vast swath of our country's mid-section from Canada to Texas, was covered with grass that had evolved to thrive in the region's heat, cold, high winds and periodic droughts.

In the latter part of the century, the Plains' enormous herds of buffalo were replaced by cattle. Around the time of World War I, encouraged by government homesteading policies, pie-in-the-sky land developers and the skyrocketing price of wheat, thousands of farmers moved to the Great Plains and plowed up the sod that had held the soil in place for millennia.

The 1920s were comparatively wet years on the Plains. Dry land farming flourished in regions that ordinarily receive fewer than 10 inches of rain annually. But a devastating drought began in the early 30s and the hard winds blew, as they always had. One hundred million acres were stripped of topsoil, producing the period's apocalyptic images of land and people destroyed by blowing dust.

In fact, it's difficult to express here just how destructive this episode was to a significant part of our country and the 2.5 million people who were forced off the land. But if Sen. Inhofe can't see the future in our own past, it's a failure of imagination. Our biggest threat isn't our climate; it's our denial.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Gambling with your future

It is with some sad amusement to hear that Saipan has now embraced gambling casinos as a new industry for the island. While I can understand the desperation to find "something" as a short-term fix for the ailing economy, out of all things, gambling (in my opinion) had to be one of the most negative propositions available to choose. Gambling ills hold especially true for a captive audience surrounded by water and no easy escape unless you have the luxury of airfare when necessary to escape its clutches.

Just like the Trojan horse myth, casinos appear as a victory trophy that is hastily wheeled in by local governments to provide local residents with jobs and dreams of new tax receipts that will solve everything. If gambling was this true fix-all and shining economic diamond, then why are gaming revenues declining in places that were once gambling strongholds? Why have a large number of casinos filed for bankruptcy and reorganization so that they can continue to operate? What is the social collateral damage and cost in destroyed lives for those who tread unprepared into the world of psychological manipulation that gambling is based on? Why is Nevada working to diversify its economy away from gambling?

Regardless of any argument I could make about the negative "health" of the gaming industry, the real concern is the effect gambling has on the local community. To keep this letter brief, I will abstain from repeating the obvious documented problems that gambling brings to a local community such as I've witnessed here in Las Vegas. Anyone who is educated knows these facts. Those who don't will soon witness them.

The true question is how much concern does your government have for the wellbeing of the community? While it is apparent that gambling is coming to Saipan, your government should be pressured to implement preventive measures to protect the lives and wellbeing of its citizens. Your gaming commission should draft measures that inhibit the participation of the local community as much as possible. First and foremost an organization that treats gambling addictions should be created. The local church and mental health organizations should participate. The gaming commission should also implement a regulation that allows for citizens to put themselves on a "voluntary banned list," which once signed, will prevent them from entering a casino establishment forever and the casinos will be required to enforce it. Liquor should be regulated on the premises. No "free" complimentary alcohol drinks should be allowed to gamblers. Alcohol and gambling is the mix that generates profits for the casinos. If free drinks are provided, they should be given to holders of a "drinking permit"—a complimentary card for registered nonresident tourists only, much like a casino rewards card (and a nice souvenir for tourists to take back home). The casino commission should be required to publicly post gambling statistics from a particular casino including odds and payoffs on particular games. The gaming commission should regulate payoffs from slot machines to insure a "fair and equitable" payoff to players (slot machines have the worst odds for players).

Overall, the bottom line is that the same people who are bringing you the casinos have an obligation to protect you from them. Gambling is an industry that survives on losers, not winners. Think about that, will you?

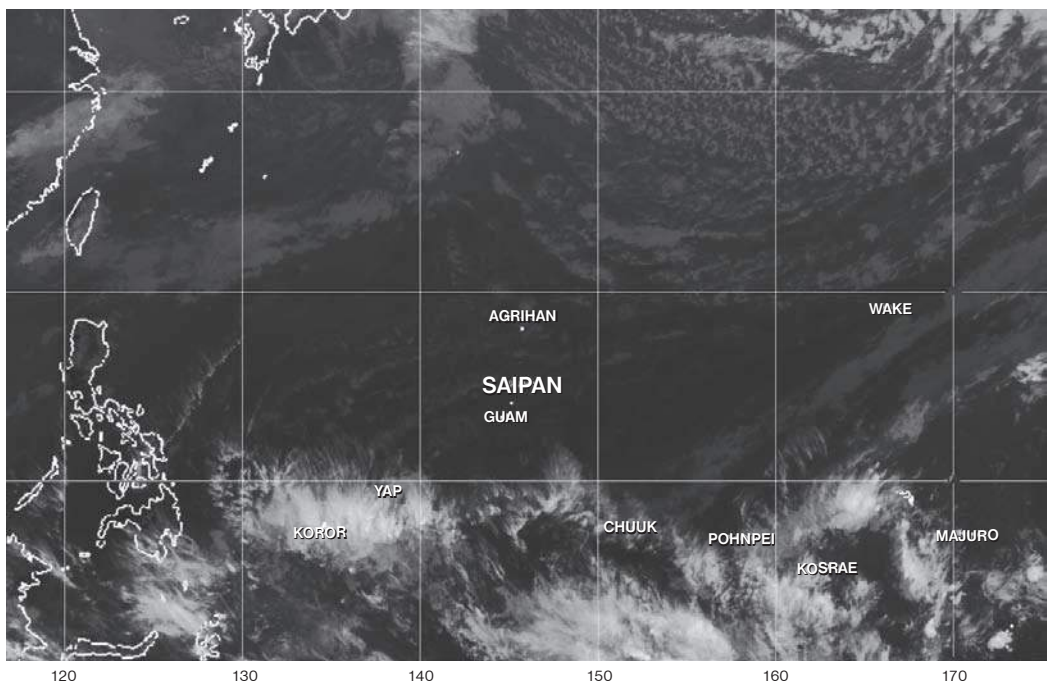
Jim Van
Las Vegas, Nevada

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Partly cloudy with a slight chance of showers. Northeast winds 5 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with a slight chance of showers. Northeast winds 5 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with a slight chance of showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲86° ▼75°	▲86° ▼75°	▲86° ▼75°	▲86° ▼75°	▲86° ▼75°

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2015

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A cold front extends southwestward from 23N180E to southeast of Wake Island at 17N170E then continues as a stationary front to 12N159E before transitioning into a shear line to end southeast of Yap near 7N142E. Cloudiness and patchy showers are found along and up to 200 miles northwest of these features. Low-level convergence south of the shear line is triggering scattered showers over Chuuk within 60 miles of a line from 7N151E to 11N157E. A near-equatorial trough stretches eastward from 2N130E to 3N140E to EQ155E. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms are occurring over Palau, southern Yap state and Southern Chuuk state along and near the trough within 100 miles of a line from 8N130E to 7N139E to 1N148E to 1N157E. A surface trough runs southwestward from southeast of Wake Island at 14N172E through a circulation centered southwest of Kosrae near 4N162E. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms are found north and east of Kosrae within 90 miles of a line curving from 6N160E to 8N164E to 8N167E to 3N170E. Similar weather is found south of Kosrae between 5N and the equator from 158E to 166E. A trade-wind disturbance is generating scattered showers and a few thunderstorms southeast of the Marshall Islands between 7N and 2N from 171E to 178E.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

Micronesia

Guam And Rota	Partly Cloudy	▲81	▼75
Palau	Thunderstorms	▲85	▼76
Yap	Partly Cloudy	▲85	▼77
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	▲84	▼79
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	▲85	▼78
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	▲84	▼80
Majuro	Partly Cloudy	▲85	▼79

Around the Globe

Auckland	Mostly Showers	▲80	▼60
Beijing	Sunny	▲52	▼23
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	▲68	▼61
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	▲83	▼69
London	Sunny	▲48	▼33
Los Angeles	Sunny	▲76	▼54
Manila	Partly Cloudy	▲85	▼71
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	▲75	▼62
Miami	Partly Cloudy	▲83	▼67
New York	Snow	▲29	▼16
Osaka	Showers	▲51	▼37
Paris	Showers	▲47	▼37
Pusan	Mostly Sunny	▲51	▼30
Rome	Sunny	▲67	▼43
Salem	Sunny	▲61	▼41
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	▲63	▼51
Seoul	Mostly Cloudy	▲45	▼27
Tokyo	Rain	▲45	▼38
Washington, DC	Partly Cloudy	▲32	▼12

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

Tides

Saipan Harbor

12:59 AM	Today	Low Tide:	-0.4 Feet
7:42 AM	Today	High Tide:	2.0 Feet
1:23 PM	Today	Low Tide:	0.9 Feet
6:44 PM	Today	High Tide:	2.1 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:41 AM	6:22 PM
Thursday	6:40 AM	6:23 PM
Friday	6:40 AM	6:23 PM
Saturday	6:39 AM	6:23 PM
Sunday	6:39 AM	6:23 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	5:36 AM	5:36 AM
Thursday	6:29 AM	6:39 AM
Friday	7:21 AM	7:41 PM
Saturday	8:11 AM	8:42 PM
Sunday	9:01 AM	9:41 PM

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E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 5, 2015

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA5070	4:15am	5:05am	Daily
UA5068	8:00am	8:50am	3
UA5068	8:40am	9:30am	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7
UA5039	2:20pm	4:00pm	6, 7 via Rota
UA5078	3:10pm	4:00pm	1, 5
UA5038	3:10pm	4:00pm	2, 4
UA5040	6:55pm	7:45pm	1, 5
UA5078	8:35pm	9:25pm	2, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA5044	10:40pm	11:30pm	1, 5

SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP)

UA5039	2:20pm	2:55pm	6, 7

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM)

UA5039	3:25pm	4:00pm	6, 7

SAIPAN-PALAU (ROR)

DL287	6:05am	1:10am+1	2, 6 via NRT

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)

DL287	6:05am	8:40am	1, 2, 4, 5, 6
DL297	4:20pm	7:05pm	Daily

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

OZ606	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ606	2:40am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
OZ6063	3:20am	7:10am	3, 4, 6, 7
OZ604	3:20pm	7:10pm	Daily
7C 3401	4:30pm	8:20pm	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

OZ608	3:10am	6:20am	4, 7

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

3U8648	6:00am	8:35am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)

MU764	1:30am	5:30am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

3U8646	4:30am	7:30am	2, 6

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ606/701	2:10am	11:15am	1 via ICN
OZ606/701	2:40am	11:15am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UA5069/PR111	2:45am	4:50pm	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM
UA5070/191	4:15am	7:20am	2, 7 via GUM
UA5070/191	4:15am	9:00am	3, 6 via GUM
UA5070/183	4:15am	8:45pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA5070/183	4:15am	9:10pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
DL287/275	6:05am	9:35pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 6 via NRT
UA5071/PR111	6:40am	4:50pm	3 via GUM
UA5071/PR111	7:15am	4:50pm	1, 5, 6, 7 via GUM
UA5068/183	8:00am	9:50pm	3 via GUM
UA5068/183	8:40am	9:30pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA5068/183	8:40am	9:50pm	1, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA5039/183	2:20pm	9:50pm	6, 7 via Rota-GUM
UA5038/183	3:10pm	9:30pm	2 via GUM
UA5078/183	3:10pm	9:30pm	5 via GUM
UA5078/183	3:10pm	9:50pm	1 via GUM
UA5038/183	3:10pm	9:50pm	4 via GUM
OZ604/703	3:20pm	11:00pm	Daily via ICN

SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)

OZ606/721	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN
OZ606/723	2:10am	12:50pm	1 via ICN
OZ606/721	2:40am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ606/723	2:40am	12:50pm	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UA5070/179	4:15am	10:35pm	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM
UA5068/179	8:00am	10:35pm	3 via GUM
UA5068/179	8:40am	10:35pm	1, 5, 6 via GUM
UA5039/179	2:20pm	10:35pm	6 via Rota-GUM
UA5078/179	3:10pm	10:35pm	1, 5 via GUM
OZ604/749	3:20pm	10:30pm	Daily via ICN

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA5069	2:45am	3:35am	Daily
UA5071	6:40am	7:30am	3
UA5071	7:15am	8:05am	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7
UA5039	1:00pm	1:50pm	6, 7
UA5038	1:10pm	2:40pm	2, 4 via Rota
UA5077	1:50pm	2:40pm	1, 5
UA5041	5:35pm	6:25pm	1, 5
UA5077	7:15pm	8:05pm	2, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA5043	9:20pm	10:10pm	1, 5

GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP)

UA5038	1:00pm	1:35pm	2, 4

ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN

UA5038	2:05pm	2:40pm	2, 4

PALAU (ROR)-SAIPAN

DL298	4:35am	3:00pm	3, 7 via NRT

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

DL298	10:25am	3:00pm	Daily
DL288	8:55pm	1:25am+1	1, 3, 4, 5, 7

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

OZ603	9:00am	2:20pm	Daily
7C 3402	10:10am	3:30pm	Daily
OZ605	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ605	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
OZ6053	8:50pm	2:10am+1	2, 3, 5, 6

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

OZ607	9:00pm	1:50am+1	3, 6

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

3U8647	10:30pm	4:30am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN

MU763	4:30pm	12:30am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

3U8645	7:55pm	3:10am+1	1, 5

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

OZ704/603	12:10am	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
PR110/UA5041	7:35am	6:25pm	1,5 via GUM
PR110/UA5077	7:35am	8:05pm	3, 6, 7 via GUM
PR110/UA5043	7:35am	10:10pm	1, 5 via GUM
DL172/288	9:40am	1:25am+1	1, 3, 4, 5, 7 via NRT
UA190/5077	9:55am	8:05pm	2, 7 via GUM
UA190/5077	10:00am	8:05pm	3, 6 via GUM
OZ702/605	12:30pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/605	12:30pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
UA184/5071	10:55pm	7:30am+1	3 via GUM
UA184/5071	10:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/5039	10:55pm	1:50pm+1	6, 7 via GUM
UA184/5038	10:55pm	2:40pm+1	4 via GUM-Rota
UA184/5077	10:55pm	2:40pm+1	1 via GUM
UA184/5041	10:55pm	6:25pm+1	1 via GUM
UA184/5077	10:55pm	8:05pm+1	3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/5043	10:55pm	10:10pm+1	1 via GUM
UA184/5071	10:59pm	8:05am+1	2, 5 via GUM
UA184/5038	10:59pm	2:40pm+1	2 via GUM-Rota
UA184/5077	10:59pm	2:40pm+1	5 via GUM
UA184/5041	10:59pm	6:25pm+1	5 via GUM
UA184/5077	10:59pm	8:05pm+1	2 via GUM
UA184/5043	10:59pm	10:10pm+1	5 via GUM

HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN

OZ746/603	12:30am	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
OZ750/603	1:10am	2:20pm	Dailly via ICN
OZ722/605	1:15pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ724/605	2:20pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/605	1:15pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
OZ724/605	2:20pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
UA180/5071	10:55pm	7:30am+1	3 via GUM
UA180/5071	10:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 5, 6 via GUM
UA180/5039	10:55pm	1:50pm+1	6 via GUM
UA180/5077	10:55pm	2:40pm+1	1, 5 via GUM-Rota
UA180/5041	10:55pm	6:25pm+1	1, 5 via GUM
UA180/5077	10:55pm	8:05pm+1	3, 6 via GUM
UA180/5043	10:55pm	10:10pm+1	1, 5 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U: Sichuan Airlines; MU: China Eastern; UA: United Airlines; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana; 7C: Jeju AirETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
7:00AM	7:15AM	Mon, Tue,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
7:30AM	7:45AM	Daily
8:30AM	8:45AM	Daily
9:30AM	9:45AM	Daily
10:30AM	10:45AM	Daily
11:30AM	11:45AM	Daily
12:30NN	12:45NN	Daily
1:30PM	1:45PM	Daily
2:30PM	2:45PM	Daily
3:30PM	3:45PM	Daily
4:30PM	4:45PM	Daily
5:30PM	5:45PM	Daily
6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily
8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily
9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily
10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily
11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily
12:00NN	12:15NN	Daily
1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily
2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily
3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily
4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily
5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily
6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO ROTA

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
7:45AM	8:15AM	Mon, Tues,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
4:00PM	4:30PM	Mon, Tues,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat

ROTA TO SAIPAN

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
8:30AM	9:00AM	Mon, Tues,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
4:45PM	5:15PM	Mon, Tues,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat

Business

Gamblers' optimism? Casino money misses states' expectations

HARTFORD, Conn. (AP)—For anyone betting on the Northeast's casino bonanza, the odds are long on projects hitting financial expectations.

In the last several states to open casinos—Ohio, Maryland and Pennsylvania—overall revenue is coming in below baseline forecasts, according to a review of state tax data. Officials blame miscalculations of spending habits and competition, but some also question how much the projected numbers reflected wishful thinking.

The casino industry has grown exponentially over the last decade as revenue-hungry states have moved to claim business that once went across state lines to Atlantic City, New Jersey, or the tribal-owned megaresorts in Connecticut. After Nevada, Pennsylvania has emerged as the country's No. 2 gambling marketing, overtaking Atlantic City, where four of 12 casinos closed last year.

As Massachusetts and New York prepare for a new round of casino building, they have added new levels of financial scrutiny, enlisting consulting firms to vet revenue projections. But the industry's growth in the Northeast's tight geography has made modeling more complex, and experts warn there are no guarantees.

"This isn't a science," analyst Alan Woinski said.

Projections are developed through so-called gravity models, premised on the concept that bigger casinos draw more people from farther away. They are used by developers and regulators to estimate how a property will perform based on factors including the affluence of surrounding towns.

The track record shows big margins for error. With access to the same data, developers regularly come back with higher projections than regulators who run the numbers themselves, especially when companies are competing for bids. A recent study by Cummings Associates, a Massachusetts-based consulting firm, found that projections done for the same project were, on average, 20 percent apart and, in cases where the casinos were actually built, almost always were proved too high.

Casinos generally remain big moneymakers, and some projects have far exceeded predictions, but state averages have been below forecasts that set expectations for tax revenue.

One of the biggest misses came in Ohio, where the state Department of Taxation weighed in on a proposed constitutional amendment in October 2009 with an estimate that casinos would generate at least $470 million in annual tax revenue. In 2014, tax revenue from the casinos totaled $267.5 million.

"In retrospect, we were guessing," said Mike Sobul, who was the tax department's director of research.

Sobul said the gravity model run by Ohio officials used industry assumptions that were overly optimistic, and, more significantly, officials underestimated how the recession would affect consumer spending.

AP

In this July 1, 2013 file photo, chips sit on a blackjack table in the Lady Luck Casino Nemacolin shortly after its grand opening in Farmington, Pa.

Hackers' $1 billion bank theft may still impact consumers

WASHINGTON (AP)—The hacker gang that looted as much as $1 billion worldwide from banks was unusual: It stole directly from the banks, instead of ripping off their customers.

But this was hardly a bit of Robin Hood banditry that spared innocent account holders. Security experts say consumers still need to keep a close eye on their checking and savings, as epic computer breaches such as this theft—documented in a report issued Monday—are becoming all too common.

"Customers are still at risk," said Sergey Golovanov, a researcher at the Russian cybersecurity firm Kaspersky Lab that released the report. "Criminals had access to all banking infrastructure, so they were able to get any data about customers."

Doug Johnson, senior vice president at the American Bankers Association, said there's no evidence that any U.S. bank has been a victim of this particular breach. Still, the report found that some of the proceeds were deposited with banks in China and the United States.

The hacks detailed in the report, which was presented at a security conference in Cancun, Mexico, are the latest twist on data breaches that have struck not just banks but the health insurer Anthem and major retailers such as Target and Home Depot. And just like those thefts, experts say there are simple protections that consumers can take.

For starters, most American bank customers are insured against theft by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. The insurance applies to any sum up to $250,000 in checking, a savings account or a certificate of deposit at a U.S. bank.

Still, more people have become vigilant about monitoring their transactions and responding to alerts from their banks if a charge or withdrawal appears to be suspicious.

"We all look at our bank statements a hell of a lot more carefully than 20 years ago," said John Gunn, vice president of communications at VASCO Data Security, which provides authentication software for financial institutions.

There are other simple moves that individuals can do to guard their financial data, said Stu Sjouwerman, founder of the data security firm KnowBe4.

Even if it appears to be from their bank, people should never open email attachments that they didn't request. Nor should they click on links inside emails, but instead type the name of their bank into the Web browser address bar. And they should only provide a Social Security number or account information over the phone on calls that they initiated.

"Those are the normal things you would recommend consumers to use," Sjouwerman said.

Eurozone issues Greece an ultimatum; Athens hopeful of deal

BRUSSELS (AP)—European creditors issued Greece with an ultimatum Monday, saying the country must accept a key condition in bailout talks by the end of the week or face having to meet its debt commitments on its own—a prospect that many in the financial markets think would leave Greece little option but to leave the euro.

After a meeting of the 19 finance ministers of the eurozone over how to make Greece's debts sustainable broke down in seeming-acrimony after barely more than three hours, Greece was told it has to ask for an extension to its bailout program before further negotiations on the country's future financing and economic course can take place.

"We simply need more time and the best way for that at this point is extend the current program which would allow a number of months for us to work on future arrangements," said Jeroen Dijsselbloem, the head of the so-called eurogroup.

Without some sort of financing arrangements in place after the current bailout ends after Feb. 28, Greece would face real difficulties meeting its obligations, such as debt repayments, over the coming months. Bankruptcy and a potential exit from the euro would loom for Greece once again.

That's why investors grew increasingly concerned Monday that a deal may not emerge in time to avoid a so-called "Grexit" from the euro—the main stock market in Greece fell 3.8 percent while the euro slipped.

Investors are worried that the two sides are poles apart especially as a cornerstone of the election campaign of Greece's new left-wing government was to scrap the bailout program. In return for 240 billion euros ($275 billion) of rescue money from 2010 onwards, successive Greek governments have had to implement a wide array of austerity measures such as deep cuts to spending and pensions.

The new Syriza government, in power for barely three weeks, blames those measures for the country's economic ills - the Greek economy is around a quarter smaller than in 2008, despite a recent modest return to growth while unemployment and poverty have swelled.

"It would be an act of subterfuge to promise to our partners to complete successfully a program we challenged the logic of," Greece's finance minister, Yanis Varoufakis, said.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Democrats seek relief from health law penalties

WASHINGTON (AP)—The official sign-up season for President Barack Obama's health care law may be over, but leading congressional Democrats say millions of Americans facing new tax penalties deserve a second chance. Three senior House members strongly urged the administration Monday to grant a special sign-up opportunity for uninsured taxpayers who will be facing fines under the law for the first time this year. The three are Michigan's Sander Levin, the ranking Democrat on the Ways and Means Committee, and Democratic Reps. Jim McDermott of Washington, and Lloyd Doggett of Texas. All worked to help steer Obama's law through rancorous congressional debates from 2009-2010. The lawmakers say they are concerned that many of their constituents will find out about the penalties after it's already too late for them to sign up for coverage, since open enrollment ended Sunday.

JetBlue's CEO battles to appease passengers and Wall Street

NEW YORK (AP)—Robin Hayes, the new CEO of JetBlue Airways, is balancing between passengers and Wall Street. As he takes control of the New York-based airline Monday, Hayes faces a difficult task: increase profits without destroying the culture that has made JetBlue stand out from other U.S. airlines. JetBlue, after all, was the first carrier to give passengers free live TV at each seat and is still known for its friendly employees. For years, the airline has resisted charging for a first checked bag and boasted the most generous legroom in the industry. But, while the airline remained profitable, it lagged behind competitors. Wall Street demanded change. To appease investors, Hayes recently announced that JetBlue will add a fee this spring for the first checked suitcase—a move estimated to bring in an extra $200 million annually by 2017. It will also add 15 more seats on most of its jets. That should increase the profit per flight, but passengers will lose some personal space.

STOCK PORTFOLIO

LEADING INDICATORS

DOW	S&P	NASDAQ
18,019.35	2,096.99	4,893.84
+46.97	+8.51	+36.22
0.26%	0.41%	0.75%

EXCHANGE RATES

In U.S. dollar terms

Australian Dollar	1.2822	Hong Kong Dollar	7.7564	Philippine Peso	44.2406
British Pound	0.6502	Indian Rupee	62.2507	Singapore Dollar	1.355
Canadian Dollar	1.2442	Indonesian Rupiah	12764.17	South Korean Won	1100.33
Chinese Yuan	6.2561	Japanese Yen	118.4732	Swiss Franc	0.9327
Euro	0.88	Malaysian Ringgit	3.5829	Taiwan Dollar	31.4419
		New Zealand Dollar	1.3293	Thailand Baht	32.5697

Nation

West Virginia train derailment sends oil tanker into river

MOUNT CARBON, W.Va. (AP)—A train carrying more than 100 tankers of crude oil derailed during a snowstorm in southern West Virginia on Monday, sending at least one tanker into a river, igniting at least 14 in all and sending a fireball hundreds of feet into the sky, officials and residents said.

Part of the derailed train slammed into a house, residents said. Officials evacuated hundreds of families and shut down two water treatment plants threatened by oil seeping into the river. And fires were still burning nearly nine hours after the accident, according to state public safety division spokesman Lawrence Messina. The plan is to let those tankers on fire burn out, he said.

David McClung said he felt the heat from one of the explosions at his home about a half mile up the hill.

"It was a little scary. It was like an atomic bomb went off," he said. One of the explosions that followed sent a fireball at least 300 feet into the air, McClung said.

One person was being treated for potential inhalation issues, but no other injuries were reported, according to a news release from CSX, the train company.

The state was under a winter storm warning and getting heavy snowfall at times, with as much as 5 inches in some places. It's not clear if the weather had anything to do with the derailment, which occurred about 1:20 p.m. along a flat stretch of rail about 30 miles southeast of Charleston. Federal railroad and hazardous materials officials are probing into the accident.

Responders at the scene reported at least one tanker went into the river, Messina said. Local emergency responders were having trouble getting to the house that caught fire, he said.

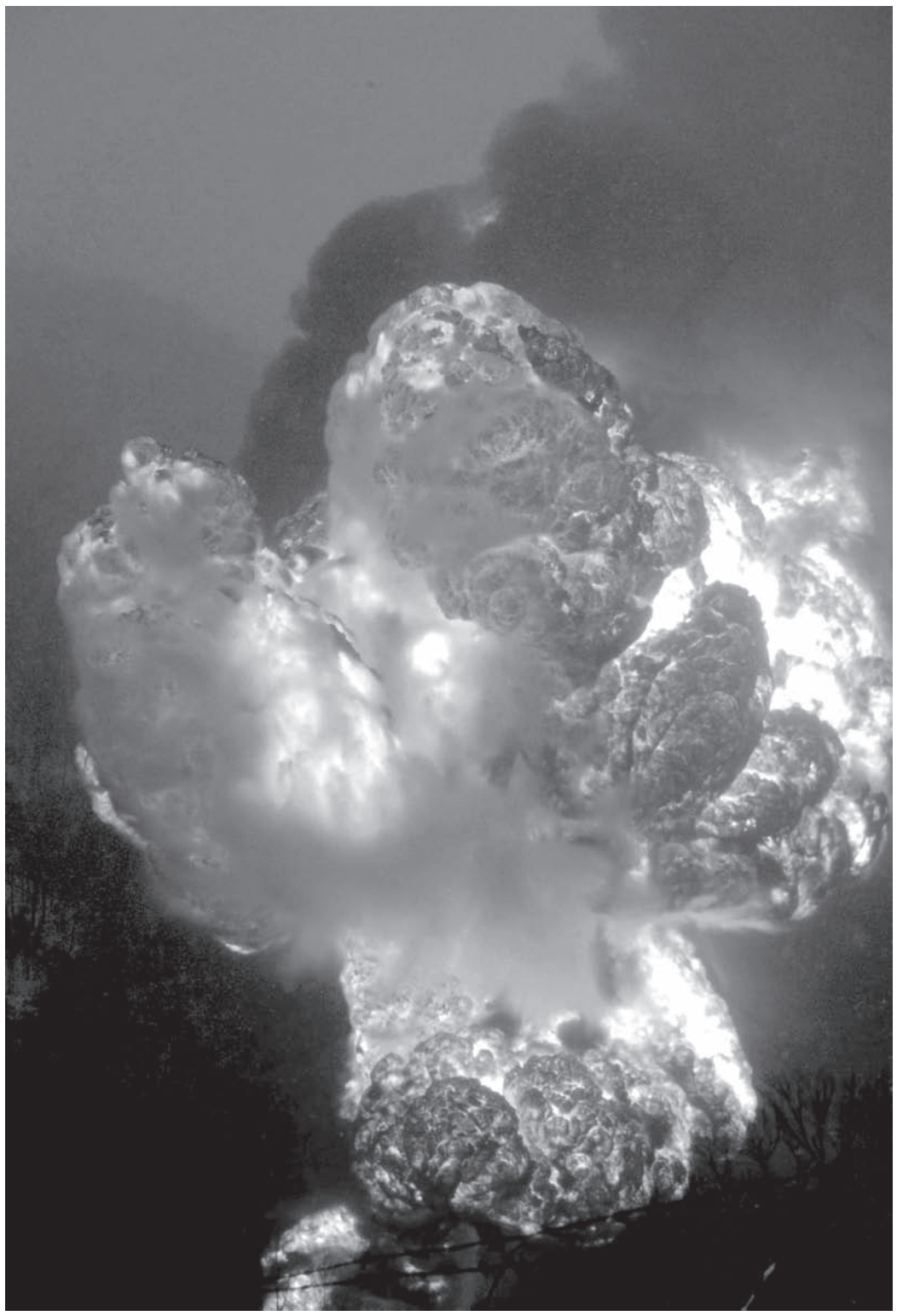
Fourteen to 17 tankers caught fire or exploded, said Jennifer Sayre, the Kanawha County manager.

Becky Nuckols heard the train hit the house directly across the river from her house in the community of Boomer.

"I thought it was a snow plow," she said. "That's what made me look out. All you heard was a big boom."

After calling 911 Nuckols said she ran outside and saw a man leave the house and take off running.

Officials opened shelters, while CSX reserved hotel rooms and opened an outreach center for affected residents.



AP

A fire burns Monday, Feb. 16, 2015, after a train derailment near Charleston, W.Va. Nearby residents were told to evacuate as state emergency response and environmental officials headed to the scene.

The office of Gov. Earl Ray Tomblin, which has issued a state of emergency, said the tanker cars were loaded with Bakken crude from North Dakota and headed to Yorktown, Virginia.

All but two of the 109 cars being hauled were tanker cars, officials said.

West Virginia American Water shut down a water treatment plant, located about 3 miles from the derailment, spokeswoman Laura Jordan. Another water plant downstream in the town of Cedar Grove also closed its intake, state health officials said.

The U.S. Transportation Department is weighing tougher safety regulations for rail shipments of crude, which can ignite and result in huge fireballs.

Many Southern states get their first major blast of winter

FRANKFORT, Ky. (AP)—It's the South's turn to suffer from the snow, freezing rain and sleet in a storm that brought back memories of one from the same time a year ago.

After weeks of snow in the Northeast, winter weather had moved through Arkansas and Kentucky and was headed east. While even small amounts of frozen precipitation can bring the region to halt, the worst was yet to come: temperatures in the single digits in areas where electricity was threatened by coatings of ice on power lines.

This February storm arrived on Presidents Day, when many schools and businesses were already closed. But the day isn't a state holiday in North Carolina so schools let out early Monday and by the afternoon officials were canceling classes Tuesday. College campuses, including from Appalachian State University in the western part of the state and University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, canceled afternoon classes Monday.

In central Kentucky, home to much of the state's signature thoroughbred industry, horses kept warm by galloping through the deep snow, pausing occasionally to shake it off from their thick winter coats. Ned Toffey, general manager of Spendthrift Farm in Lexington, said the horses enjoy running in the snow because it gives them a nice cushion as opposed to the harder, packed earth.

Still, some weren't quite ready for the winter blast.

RL Doss said he had already used his 1987 GMC Suburban—which can haul up to three-quarters of a ton with ropes and chains—to rescue several people and their cars on the hills surrounding Frankfort. Cars were fishtailing and sliding off the slick roads.

"I look at it this way. Everybody is trying to get out, to get their last bit of food and stuff, getting home from work and people leaving for work and stuff, and it happens," he said, shivering in a pair of tan overalls pulled over a hooded sweat shirt.

Roads were brined and parking lots salted as officials tried to avoid a disastrous repeat of last year's February storm, when rush-hour traffic and a thin coating ice combined to leave people either stuck in their cars or their cars abandoned in roads as they walked home in Atlanta and Raleigh, North Carolina. That storm dumped as much as 22 inches of snow in the North Carolina mountains and pelted the eastern part of the state with ice, much as was expected with the 2015 version.

Federal judge stalls Obama's executive action on immigration

HOUSTON (AP)—A federal judge temporarily blocked President Barack Obama's executive action on immigration Monday, giving a coalition of 26 states time to pursue a lawsuit that aims to permanently stop the orders.

U.S. District Judge Andrew Hanen's decision puts on hold Obama's orders that could spare as many as five million people who are in the U.S. illegally from deportation.

The federal government is expected to appeal the ruling to the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans. The Justice Department had no immediate comment late Monday night.

Hanen's decision will not have any immediate effect because the first of Obama's orders—to expand a program that protects young immigrants from deportation if they were brought to the U.S. illegally as children—is not set to start taking effect until Feb. 18. The other major part of Obama's order, which extends deportation protections to parents of U.S. citizens and permanent residents who have been in the country for some years, is not expected to begin until May 19.

In a 2013 ruling in a separate case, Hanen suggested the Homeland Security Department should be arresting parents living in the U.S. illegally who induce their children to cross the border illegally.

The coalition, led by Texas and made up of mostly conservative states in the South and Midwest, argues that Obama has violated the "Take Care Clause" of the U.S. Constitution, which they say limits the scope of presidential power. They also say the order will force increased investment in law enforcement, health care and education.

In their request for the injunction, the coalition said it was necessary because it would be "difficult or impossible to undo the President's lawlessness after the Defendants start granting applications for deferred action."

Congressional Republicans have vowed to block Obama's actions on immigration by cutting off Homeland Security Department spending for the program. Earlier this year, the Republican-controlled House passed a $39.7 billion spending bill to fund the department through the end of the budget year, but attached language to undo Obama's executive actions. The fate of that House-passed bill is unclear as Republicans in the Senate are six votes shy of the 60-vote majority needed to advance most legislation.

Amid measles outbreak, few rules on teacher vaccinations

LOS ANGELES (AP)—While much of the attention in the ongoing measles outbreak has focused on student vaccination requirements and exemptions, less attention has been paid to another group in the nation's classrooms: Teachers and staff members, who, by and large, are not required to be vaccinated.

In most states, there is no law dictating which vaccines teachers and school staff workers are required to get. Some states provide a list of recommended vaccines, but there is no requirement or follow-up for teachers to receive them.

So when a measles case surfaced at a California high school, it was easy for officials to review student records, but there were no immunization records on file for employees.

That meant all 24 teachers and staff exposed to the employee with measles had to prove their immunity—records that, for most, were decades old.

The issue has surfaced from time to time in state legislatures and is likely to be raised again in response to the latest outbreak, which originated at Disneyland in December and has spread to a half dozen states and Mexico. Most of those who fell ill were not vaccinated. As of Friday, public health officials said 114 people had contracted measles.

"I was definitely shocked," Rep. Joanna Cole, a Democrat in the Vermont Legislature, said when she learned in 2012 that there were no teacher vaccination requirements in her state. There are still no requirements today. "I guess we all just assumed that they would have them."

Asia

China takes down senior leader amid anti-corruption campaign

BEIJING (AP)—A former top official accused of taking bribes in return for government positions is under criminal investigation, Chinese prosecutors said Tuesday, a day after he was expelled from the ruling Communist party and stripped of all government positions.

Su Rong, a former provincial party leader and former vice chairman of China's top political advisory body, is one of the most senior officials to have fallen in President Xi Jinping's sweeping anti-corruption drive.

Xi has warned that rampant corruption, if unaddressed, threatens the party's rule. About 70 high-ranking officials have been implicated in Xi's campaign, speaking not only to the severity of corruption but also the determination of Xi's administration to root out the problem.

Last year, the public applauded when Xi took down Zhou Yongkang, a former member of the all-powerful standing committee of the party's Political Bureau, over corruption charges. Zhou is the highest-ranking official, albert retired, to be snared in Xi's campaign.

Su, 66, came under investigation last year when he was still serving as vice chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Congress, which makes his ouster remarkable.

Before he took the national position, Su had served as the provincial party chief for three provinces—Qinghai, Gansu and Jiangxi. That position has more power than that of a provincial governor.

The Central Commission for Discipline Inspection, the Communist Party's top watchdog agency, said Monday in a written statement that Su violated party disciplines by altering decisions arbitrarily. The commission said Su also took "huge amounts of bribes" and, in turn, sought promotions for others and benefits for businesses.

The party agency said Su's acts have caused significant losses in state assets and that he was responsible for severe corruption in Jiangxi.

The statement said the party has handed his case over to judicial authorities, who are likely to indict Su on charges of taking bribes and abusing public power.

China's national prosecutors said Tuesday they have started to investigate Su and placed limits on his freedom of movement.

Indonesia moving 2 Aussies, 5 other foreigners for execution

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP)—Eight convicted drug smugglers, including seven foreigners, will be transferred to an Indonesian prison island this week for imminent execution despite international appeals for clemency, an official said Monday.

Among the eight are Andrew Chan, 31, and Myuran Sukumaran, 33, the ringleaders of a group of nine Australians arrested in 2005 for attempting to smuggle 8.3 kilograms (18.3 pounds) of heroin to Australia from the Indonesian resort island of Bali. The seven other members of the group—dubbed the "Bali Nine" by Australian media—have received prison sentences ranging from 20 years to life.

In addition to Chan and Sukumaran, five men from France, Brazil, Ghana, Nigeria and Indonesia, and a woman from the Philippines, will face a firing squad after being moved to Nusa Kambangan prison, Attorney General's Office spokesman Tony Spontana said, without giving exact dates. Six other drug smugglers, including five foreigners, were executed in January at the same prison, located off Indonesia's main island of Java.

Indonesian President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo has rejected appeals by Australia's government for clemency for Chan and Sukumaran, and vowed not to grant mercy to any other drug offenders because Indonesia is suffering a "drug emergency."

Australia has abolished capital punishment and opposes executions of any Australian overseas.

Lawyers for the two Australians, who are currently being held at a Bali prison, filed a complaint in an administrative court last week to challenge Jokowi's rejection of the appeals, arguing that it was made without consideration of their remorse and rehabilitation. A hearing on the complaint is scheduled for next week.

Spontana, however, said the executions would not be delayed. "Their legal options were exhausted after their clemency was rejected by the president," he said. "The next step is execution."

In Australia earlier Monday, Prime Minister Tony Abbott said he had personally appealed to Jokowi to stop the executions.

"Like millions of Australians, I feel sick in the pit of my stomach when I think about what is quite possibly happening to these youngsters," he told reporters.

Abbott said his government has been trying to appeal to Indonesia's sense of itself as a stable democracy under the rule of law.

HOT AIR BALLOON FESTIVAL AP

Special-shape hot air balloons known as Vincent van Gogh, left, and Maximus The Beagle Dog, prepare to take off at the start of the 19th Philippine Hot Air Balloon festival Thursday, Feb. 12, 2015 at Clark Special Economic Zone, Pampanga province north of Manila, Philippines. Now on its 19th year, the hot air balloon festival features a total of 32 hot air balloons participating from all over the world.

India's Modi talking with newly elected Sri Lankan president

NEW DELHI (AP)—Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Sri Lanka's newly elected president, Maithripala Sirisena, held wide-ranging talks Monday as the South Asian neighbors sought to strengthen strategic ties, increase trade and resolve long-standing issues between their nations.

This was Sirisena's first foreign visit as president, and Indian officials said it indicated the easing of tensions that had crept into the relationship as China made forays into what New Delhi considers its strategic backyard.

Modi said the security and prosperity of the two countries was indivisible and they were committed to unlock the potential of their economic cooperation, citing a nuclear agreement that was reached.

"The bilateral agreement on civil nuclear cooperation is yet another demonstration of our mutual trust," Modi told journalists soon after his talks with the Sri Lankan leader.

The nuclear agreement would allow India and Sri Lanka to share expertise on the management of radioactive waste, nuclear disaster mitigation and environmental protection, officials said. It would also allow the training of Sri Lankans in the use of radioisotopes, nuclear and radiation safety and nuclear security.

Sri Lankan lawmakers in the past have raised concerns about the safety of India's Russian-built nuclear power plants in Tamil Nadu state, near Sri Lanka.

The talks between Modi and Sirisena appeared to have put relations between the neighbors back on track, with both leaders agreeing to resolve many of the irritants in their ties.

Over the past decade, India has watched with concern as China pumped billions of dollars into infrastructure projects in Sri Lanka.

Last year, President Xi Jinping became the first Chinese leader to visit Sri Lanka in 28 years as he courted Colombo's support for a maritime trade route. Sri Lanka also irked New Delhi by allowing two Chinese submarines to dock along its coastline.

After the stunning defeat of his predecessor Mahinda Rajapaksha in general elections last month, Sirisena has tried to restore a balance between the two Asian giants. He plans a visit to China soon.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Japan to give $15.5M for anti-terror efforts

TOKYO (AP)—Japan says it will provide $15.5 million in development aid to support anti-terrorism efforts in the Middle East and Africa. The move comes after the recent beheadings of two Japanese hostages by militants from the Islamic State group. Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida said Tuesday the contribution, about half of which Japan had already pledged, is intended to bolster counter-terrorism capacity in the regions affected by the group and other militants. Earlier this year, before the hostage crisis, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe announced $200 million in non-military support for nations fighting against the Islamic State militants that control large parts of Iraq and Syria.

Vice-Foreign Minister Yasuhide Nakayama will announce the aid, to be paid through international organizations, at a conference Thursday in Washington.

Opposition party member sworn in as premier of East Timor

DILI, East Timor (AP)—Opposition party member Rui Maria de Araujo was sworn in Monday as East Timor's prime minister, leading a smaller 38-member Cabinet for the half-island nation. The 50-year-old former health minister took the oath of office along with 37 Cabinet ministers in a ceremony presided over by President Taur Matan Ruak at the Lahane palace on the outskirts of the capital Dili. Araujo replaced former guerrilla leader Xanana Gusmao, who resigned early this month to allow a new generation to take power. Gusmao remains in the government, becoming minister of planning and strategic investment. "Today marks a new history of democracy in this country," Araujo said in his inaugural speech. "Our past has come to save our future, because our predecessor, the father of country, gave us, the new generation, a great responsibility," he added, referring to Gusmao.

Tsunamis advisory lifted after quake off northeast Japan

TOKYO (AP)—A magnitude-6.9 earthquake struck off the northeastern coast of Japan early Tuesday, triggering minor tsunamis but no reports of major damage or injuries. The Japan Meteorological Agency lifted a tsunami advisory two hours after it was issued following the quake, which hit at 8 a.m. Japan time (2300 GMT). The quake's epicenter was at a depth of about 10 kilometers (6 miles). It shook much of northeast Japan and could be felt in Tokyo, 690 kilometers (430 miles) away. Small tsunamis of up to 20 centimeters (8 inches) were recorded after the quake along the coast of Iwate prefecture, according to the agency, much smaller than the possible 1-meter (3-foot) tsunami mentioned in the advisory. Several smaller aftershocks were also reported in the area.

World

Egypt strikes IS in Libya, pushes for international action

CAIRO (AP)—Egypt bombed Islamic State militants in neighboring Libya on Monday and called on the United States and Europe to join an international military intervention in the chaotic North African state after extremists beheaded a group of Egyptian Christians.

The airstrikes bring Egypt overtly into Libya's turmoil, a reflection of Cairo's increasing alarm. Egypt now faces threats on two fronts—a growing stronghold of radicals on its western border and a militant insurgency of Islamic State allies on its eastern flank in the Sinai Peninsula—as well as its own internal challenges.

Islamic State group weapons caches and training camps were targeted "to avenge the bloodshed and to seek retribution from the killers," a military statement said. "Let those far and near know that Egyptians have a shield to protect and safeguard the security of the country and a sword that cuts off terrorism."

The announcement on state radio represents Egypt's first public acknowledgement of military action in post-Moammar Gadhafi Libya, where there has been almost no government control.

Libya is where the Islamic State group has built up its strongest presence outside Syria and Iraq. Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi is lobbying Europe and the United States for a coordinated international response similar to the coalition air campaign in those countries.

"What is happening in Libya is a threat to international peace and security," said El-Sissi.

El-Sissi spoke with France's president and Italy's prime minister Monday about Libya, and sent his foreign minister, Sameh Shukri, to New York to consult at the United Nations ahead of a terrorism conference opening Wednesday in Washington.

AP

Egyptians, mostly Christians chant slogans during a protest against Egyptian Coptic Christians who were captured in Libya and killed by militants affiliated with the Islamic State group, in Cairo, Egypt, Monday, Feb. 16, 2015.

The bombs were dropped by U.S.-made F-16 fighter jets that left Egyptian bases for targets in the eastern Libyan city of Darna, according to Egyptian and Libyan security officials who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to talk the press.

The strikes came hours after the Islamic State group issued a grisly video of the beheadings of 21 Egyptian Christians, mainly young men from impoverished families who were kidnapped after travelling to Libya for work. The video shows them being marched onto what is purported to be a Libyan beach before masked militants with knives carve off their heads.

Thirteen of the 21 came from Egypt's tiny Christian-majority village of el-Aour, where relatives wept in church and shouted the names of the dead on Monday.

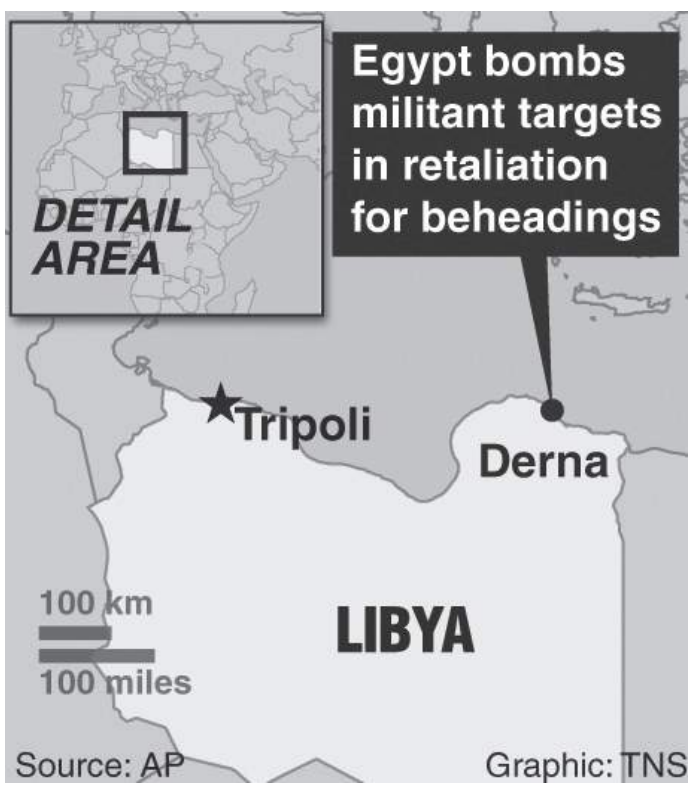
Babawi Walham, his eyes swollen from crying and barely able to speak, said his brother Samuel, a 30-year-old plumber, was in the video his family saw on the news Sunday night.

"Our life has been turned upside down," he told The Associated Press. "I watched the video. I saw my brother. My heart stopped beating. I felt what he felt."

Libyan extremists loyal to the Islamic State and some 400 fighters from Yemen and Tunisia have seized control of Darna and the central city of Sirte and have built up a powerful presence in the capital, Tripoli, as well as the second-largest city, Benghazi. Libya's internationally recognized government has been driven into the country's far eastern corner.

Without publicly acknowledging it, Egypt and the United Arab Emirates carried out airstrikes against Islamist-allied militias last year, according to U.S. officials.

"We will not fight there on the ground on behalf of anyone, but we will not allow the danger to come any closer to us," said one Egyptian security official, who claimed that intelligence recently gathered in Libya suggests advanced preparations by Islamic State militants to cross the border into Egypt. He did not elaborate.



A history of the Islamic State group's atrocities, gains

CAIRO (AP)—The extremist Islamic State group, which now controls a third of both Iraq and Syria in its self-declared caliphate, has inspired militants in Libya to behead Coptic Christians they held.

The Libyan militants had earlier pledged its loyalty to the group, which grew out of the remnants of al-Qaida's former Iraqi branch under extremist leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. The group has demanded the allegiance of all the world's Muslims and attracted foreigners with online videos featuring atrocities like the mass shootings of prisoners and the beheadings of Western hostages, films put together with Hollywood-style special effects.

Though beaten back by airstrikes launched by a U.S.-led coalition, the Islamic State group remains a potent threat, Western officials warn. Here's a look at the group's birth, its atrocities and the world's response to the extremists.

April 18, 2010—U.S. and Iraqi forces kill two top al-Qaida in Iraq leaders, allowing al-Baghdadi to become the leader of a terror group weakened by a concerted campaign aimed at ending a Sunni insurgency in the country.

Oct. 31, 2010—Al-Baghdadi's al-Qaida militants attack Our Lady of Salvation Catholic church in Baghdad during Sunday night mass, killing 58 people in the deadliest assault targeting Christians since the 2003 U.S.-led invasion there. The militants reportedly demand the release of Muslim women they claim were held by Egypt's Coptic Christian church.

Oct. 4, 2011—The U.S. puts a $10 million bounty on al-Baghdadi's head over a series of attacks he orchestrated.

July 21, 2012—In his first purported online message, al-Baghdadi promises to regain lost ground in Iraq and calls on militants to "chase and liquidate the judges, the investigators and the guards." Within days, his group begins a campaign of attacks, car bombings and other assaults killing hundreds. He also mentions Syria, in the grips of a civil war pitting largely Sunni rebels against embattled President Bashar Assad. By this time, al-Baghdadi already has begun to send fighters there.

April 2013—Al-Baghdadi announces his group has taken over the Nusra Front, the al-Qaida affiliate in Syria. Nusra denies the takeover, sparking anger and infighting that continues to this day.

July 2013—A military-style assault by al-Baghdadi's fighters on two Baghdad-area prisons free more than 500 inmates.

January 2014—Al-Baghdadi's forces sweep into Ramadi and Fallujah in Iraq's Anbar province, which Iraqi security forces had abandoned weeks earlier. That came after security forces killed demonstrators during a Sunni protest, effectively turning the unrest into an uprising.

Early February 2014—Al-Qaida breaks with al-Baghdadi's group, now known as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant. Al-Baghdadi ignores al-Qaida as his group now has control of wide regions of Syria, including the city of Raqqa, which becomes the group's de facto capital.

June 10—Al-Baghdadi's fighters take over Iraq's second-largest city of Mosul, followed by Saddam Hussein's hometown of Tikrit and smaller communities in the Sunni heartland as government forces melt away.

June 29—The group declares the establishment of an Islamic state, or caliphate, in territories it controls in Iraq and Syria and demands allegiance from Muslims worldwide. It declares al-Baghdadi the leader of the new caliphate. The militants rename themselves the Islamic State group.

July 5—A man purporting to be al-Baghdadi makes his first public appearance, delivering a sermon at a mosque in Mosul.

Aug. 8—The U.S. begins targeting the Islamic State group with airstrikes, citing the humanitarian plight of Iraq's minorities, like the Yazidi.

Aug. 19—The Islamic State group releases a video showing a jihadi behead James Foley, a 40-year-old journalist from Rochester, New Hampshire, in response to the U.S.-led airstrikes. This marks the first of many videos showing militants behead Western captives.

Sept. 2—The Islamic State group releases a video showing a jihadi behead American-Israeli journalist Steven Sotloff.

Sept. 13—The Islamic State group releases a video showing a jihadi behead British aid worker David Haines.

Oct. 3—The Islamic State group releases a video showing a jihadi behead British hostage Alan Henning.

Nov. 8—Iraqi officials say al-Baghdadi is wounded in an airstrike on an Iraqi town near the Syrian border. Days later, an online audio message purportedly from al-Baghdadi urges his followers to "explode the volcanoes of jihad everywhere."

Nov. 16—An Islamic State group video shows extremists behead a dozen Syrian soldiers and U.S. aid worker Peter Kassig.

Focus

Tighter online controls in China point to wider clampdown

By JACK CHANG
ASSOCIATED PRESS

AP

A man surfs the Internet on his laptop computer at a Starbucks cafe in Beijing Monday, Feb. 16, 2015. On the Internet, in college classrooms and in corporate offices, the Chinese Communist Party has raised the virtual wall separating the world's most populous country from the rest of the globe. Experts say it reflects a distrust of outside influences that party thinks could threaten its control on society.

BEIJING (AP)—Working out of a Beijing office full of video game designers from around the world, Chinese-born Pin Wang and his startup Substantial Games should be the face of the innovative, forward-looking China that the country's leaders say they want to build.

Pin and his team are attracting investors from across China while launching online games full of swords and sorcery that they hope will dazzle global eyeballs. But for several weeks, Pin's team has struggled with a decidedly down-to-earth problem that's hit countless companies nationwide: They're unable to access their email, shared documents and other online services blocked by China's Internet censors.

"Something that should take 15 seconds takes three or five minutes, and it screws with the way you flow or you work," Pin said. "We don't have the resources to move because we're a startup. But we talk about it all the time."

Chinese controls on information have tightened and loosened over the years, but Pin and others are feeling what many say is China's most severe crackdown in decades on how people learn about the world around them, talk to each other and do business.

On the Internet, in college classrooms and in corporate offices, the Chinese Communist Party has raised the virtual wall separating the most populous country from the rest of the globe. Experts say it reflects a distrust of outside influences that the party thinks could threaten its control on society.

Companies that have depended for years on virtual private networks, or VPNs, to get around Chinese online censors and access business tools have seen those channels squeezed or shut down since the start of the year.

Academics who have long helped Chinese authorities distill foreign ideas into public policy have been told to watch what they say, especially about so-called Western ideas that clash with party doctrine. And many foreign companies that were welcomed into China's booming economy have seen their offices raided by investigators and been forced to pay record fines in antitrust investigations.

Despite Chinese government pledges to create an innovation economy that leads the world, China ranked 22nd out of 50 countries, between Ireland and Spain, in a global innovation index released this month by Bloomberg financial news service.

"To have the best educational system and the best university has nothing to do with how many high-rises you have and how many good dining halls you have," said Rowena He, a Harvard University lecturer. "The most important thing at the core is the intellectual freedom that makes up life in a university and academia," she said. "But instead of opening up to reforms, we see the opposite."

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying responded to the concerns of foreign businesses by pointing to a U.N. report showing China became the world's top destination for foreign direct investment in 2014.

Hua also echoed previous government arguments that people online needed to first obey Chinese regulations on "healthy" Internet use.

"As long as foreign companies in China observe the Chinese law and refrain from undermining China's national security and consumers' interest, China will protect their legal rights and welcome their business expansion," Hua said.

The tighter controls reflect instability within the party as President Xi Jinping shakes up the political landscape in a much-publicized anti-corruption campaign that's netted thousands of government officials, said prominent China scholar Perry Link. The strategy echoes back to the political purges of Mao Zedong, the founding father of the People's Republic of China, Link said.

> *To have the best educational system and the best university has nothing to do with how many high-rises you have and how many good dining halls you have. The most important thing at the core is intellectual freedom...*

"Since Xi Jinping has come in, the clampdown has been stronger and more unidirectional than anything since the Mao era," Link said.

Professor Xia Yeliang was among the first to feel the consequences when the economics faculty of prestigious Peking University voted to expel him in October 2013, a month before Xi took power after a lengthy, stage-managed transition. Xia had long been an advocate for democratic reforms in China and helped draft Charter 08, a bold call for sweeping changes to China's political system.

Xia said more than 20 professors in China have been expelled or otherwise disciplined for their political teachings since Xi came to power. "Through my colleagues, I can sense that the ideological controls are getting much tighter," said Xia, now a visiting fellow at the libertarian U.S. think tank the Cato Institute.

In that political climate, the government sees the Internet as a top threat and has responded by building a ubiquitous system for censoring what people in China can see online. Xi presides over the powerful Central Internet Security and Information Leading Group, which formed three months after he took power.

The list of controls grows every month.

Late last year, Chinese censors finally blocked all Google services after the U.S. company refused to cooperate with them in 2010. This month, officials required that all Chinese blog and chat room users register with their real names and promise in writing to avoid challenging the political system. In the coming weeks, new cybersecurity regulations will reportedly require foreign companies to turn over sensitive intellectual property and submit their products to security checks.

The party has paid especially close attention to the microblog Weibo and censored messages that touch on sensitive subjects, said Rogier Creemers, a research officer at Oxford University's Programme for Comparative Media Law and Policy.

"Weibo has become a venue for chaotic discussion, and part of the effect it had was it essentially meant the party had lost the initiative and couldn't say what got into the public sphere," Creemers said.

The latest moves are in line with Beijing's longtime approach to regulatory change: It eases control on commercial or other activity, sees how it develops and then promotes aspects it wants while suppressing those it doesn't.

Chinese Internet users, for example, still are avid consumers of social media, e-commerce and video streaming sites, even if the censors are always lurking, said Dali Yang, faculty director of the University of Chicago's center in Beijing.

"This is a society with a tremendous level of information, people who are very well educated in terms of actual information and they know of history going back centuries," Yang said.

Still, while Chinese leaders see the Internet as a source of prosperity and jobs, they are willing to give up commercial gains to enforce political controls. When the government clashed with Google, people in the industry warned that driving out the U.S. search giant would hurt China's development.

Walling off China's Internet has allowed some local websites such as search engine Baidu and Weibo to prosper in the absence of foreign competition. Other local companies, such as Pin's startup, chafe at the restrictions.

Foreign entrepreneurs and companies, meanwhile, are trying to figure out whether the costs of doing business in China outweigh the benefits of tapping the world's second-biggest economy.

Rich Chinese also are looking to leave the country. A survey by the British bank Barclays last year found that 47 percent of more than 2,000 high-worth Chinese are hoping to move within five years. The poll found that their top reasons were greater educational and economic opportunities for their children and overall economic security.

"Beijing is an attractive place to be because of the amazing talent," said Beijing-based entrepreneur Nils Pihl, who heads the database startup Traintracks. "But it's getting harder for us to stay, and my social feed is full of other CEOs saying they're worried they will have to leave."

Good Housekeeping

New lawn mower engine never needs an oil change

By RICK BARRETT
MILWAUKEE JOURNAL SENTINEL

MILWAUKEE—Calling it an end to a messy annual ritual, and a first for the outdoor power equipment industry, Briggs & Stratton Corp. has developed a lawn mower engine that never needs an oil change.

The new engine will be available this spring on certain Toro, Craftsman, Snapper, Troy-Bilt and Yard Machine walk-behind mowers. Its air intake system is sealed tighter so that dirt doesn't get inside the engine and contaminate the oil, and the engine runs cooler so that heat doesn't break down the lubricant.

"If an engine runs cooler, with less debris in the oil, it will last longer," said Rick Zeckmeister, Briggs vice president of marketing and planning.

The four-stroke mower engine is designed to last the life of the equipment it's used on, which could be about 12 years, without an oil change. Briggs says the engine will set a precedent in the lawn and garden equipment industry, and none of its competitors has an engine that doesn't require an oil change.

The new design stems partly from consumer research that showed people understood the value of changing engine oil, to increase the life span of their mower, but they didn't necessarily perform the maintenance.

Walk-behind mowers usually have to be tipped upside down to drain the oil, and then there's the hassle of disposing the used lubricant. If you're not careful when doing an oil change, you also could introduce dirt into the engine which causes premature wear.

"It's just messy, and sometimes you do more damage than good," Zeckmeister said.

The new engine comes on mowers priced from $250 to $400, in power ratings of 6.75- and 7.25-foot pounds of torque. Briggs says it has an automotive-style air filter to keep out debris, a new cooling fan for optimum airflow, an automotive-style piston and rings, and an overhead-valve design that rejects exhaust heat through the cylinder head, away from the oil.

MILWAUKEE JOURNAL SENTINEL/TNS
Rick Zeckmeister, vice president of marketing and planning at Briggs and Stratton, shows the features of the industry's first small 4-stroke gasoline engine that never needs an oil change. He demonstrates the easy-access air filter in Milwaukee on January 27, 2015.

The engine is being produced at a Briggs plant in Poplar Bluff, Mo. The plant was completely rebuilt to provide better control over the manufacturing process, Zeckmeister said.

Oil is the lifeblood of an engine. It protects the moving parts but gradually loses that ability as heat, dirt particles, moisture and air break down the lubricating properties.

The new engine uses the same oil as other Briggs engines. You still have to add it occasionally, but an improved oil-fill tube helps keep debris out, and an improved fuel spout helps prevent gasoline spills.

Briggs, the world's largest manufacturer of small gasoline engines, has logged hundreds of hours testing the new design, including field tests in dirty conditions in Florida. In the future, the company plans to use the design on other outdoor power products besides walk-behind mowers.

The challenge was to produce an engine that was powerful enough, durable, affordable, and didn't require an oil change. "Nobody wants a disposable lawn mower," Zeckmeister said.

Still, some say that consumers now expect to use all kinds of products a few years and then throw them away.

"People don't buy something with the idea of maintaining it for 10 or 12 years. Unfortunately, that's not the mind-set anymore," said Patrick Hanson, an engine mechanics instructor at Milwaukee Area Technical College.

The lack of maintenance is the No. 1 reason lawn mowers fail prematurely, Hanson said.

Even an engine that the manufacturer says never needs an oil change would benefit from it, according to Hanson.

"I would still recommend changing the oil once a year," he said.

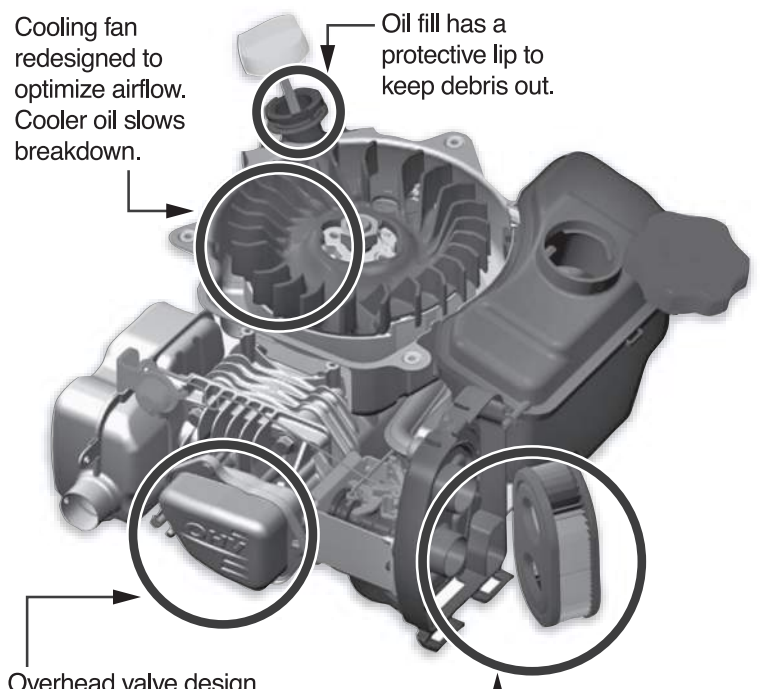
With its other mower engines, Briggs recommends an oil change about every 25 operating hours.

"Just like the oil in a vehicle operated in extremely dirty or dusty conditions at high speeds, the oil in a lawn mower or other small engine breaks down faster under tough conditions such as wet grass, heavy dust, high temperatures, and rough or hilly terrain," the company says on its website.

There's no need to change the oil with the new Briggs engine, but it won't hurt if you do it anyway, according to the company.

Cooler running lawnmower engine

In an effort to produce an engine that fits most consumers' no-maintenance habits, Briggs & Stratton has developed a new four-stroke engine that requires less oil upkeep. The trick is to keep the oil clean and cool. Here's how the new engines aim to do just that.


Cooling fan redesigned to optimize airflow. Cooler oil slows breakdown.
Oil fill has a protective lip to keep debris out.
Overhead valve design minimizes heat through the cylinder head making the oil about 10 degrees cooler.
Air cleaner is redesigned to produce tighter seals.

Source: Briggs & Stratton, Journal Sentinel
Graphic: Tribune News Service

COMFORT FOOD

Country-Style Ham and Potato Chowder

By HEALTHY EXCHANGES
(C) 2015 KING FEATURES SYND., INC.

I love any kind of soup, but I especially love potato soup. It's the most comforting soup I can think of. Try this healthy version and see if you don't agree.

- 1 (10 3/4-ounce) can reduced-fat cream of celery soup
- 1 cup fat-free milk
- 1 teaspoon dried onion flakes
- 1 teaspoon dried parsley flakes
- 1 1/2 cups diced extra-lean ham
- 1 1/2 cups diced cooked potatoes
- 1 cup frozen whole-kernel corn, thawed
- 1 cup frozen cut broccoli, thawed

1. In a large saucepan, combine celery soup, milk, onion flakes and parsley flakes. Add ham, potatoes and corn. Mix well to combine. Stir in broccoli.

2. Bring mixture to a boil, stirring often. Lower heat, cover and simmer for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Makes 4 (1 1/4 cup each) servings.

** Each serving equals: 240 calories, 4g fat, 19g protein, 32g carb., 730mg sodium, 4g fiber; Diabetic Exchanges: 1 1/2 Starch, 1 1/2 Meat, 1 Vegetable.*

7 ways to get creative with kitchen storage

By OSEYE BOYD
ANGIE'S LIST

No matter the size of your kitchen, it always seems like there's never enough space. Maybe at one time you thought it was the perfect size, but after years of purchasing kitchen gadgets and new dishes, along with having a growing family, the thrill is gone.

However, there's no need to fret. We've got you covered with seven space-saving, creative storage solutions to make your kitchen feel brand new, and hopefully you'll fall in love with it all over again.

1 **Go high. Step back and look at your kitchen as a whole.** Notice anything? You may see there's prime real estate up high, such as on top of the refrigerator and above cabinets and doors. Take advantage of these spaces to store cookbooks, canisters or even wine bottles.

2 **Get low.** Make existing features in your kitchen functional with toe-kick drawers. Most cabinets sit off the floor with toe kicks, and now there are kits available to create drawers that open with a tap of your toes. A toe-kick drawer is a great place to house pet feeding dishes.

3 **Hangin' on.** Sure, you can hang pots and pans from the ceiling or add a rack to a wall, but you might try hanging baskets to store dish cloths and towels. Use hooks to hang pot holders or utensils. Peg boards aren't just for tools in the garage. Use them to create a cool place to hang pots and pans, mugs or utensils.

4 **Slide and glide.** Install sliding drawers on the side of your range to add functionality. The drawers don't take up much room but are deep enough to provide plenty of storage. A sliding storage tower (on wheels!) is another option to make use of narrow spaces, such as between your oven and fridge.

5 **Rack it up.** Door racks on the inside of cabinet or pantry doors provide instant space-saving storage. While you're in the mood, add racks to the wall near the stove to store spices, olive oil or other often-used items for easy accessibility, or create a wine rack with everything you need—bottles, glasses and a corkscrew.

6 **Island living.** The options for using your island are endless. Add cabinets underneath for additional storage, shelves on one side to store kitchen gadgets, or install a built-in trash can to preserve floor space.

7 **Cubby it up.** Take it back to elementary school by creating cubby holes for cookie sheets, cake pans or other bakeware. Think high again, and build cubbies in the space between the cabinet and ceiling to store wine bottles.

Life & Style

Helen Mirren returns to New York as queen of the subway

NEW YORK (AP)—Trust Helen Mirren to look regal while surrounded by rats, seat hogs and grime.

The 69-year-old Oscar winner has been spotted riding the city's squalid subway system and offering a lesson in elegance along the way.

She was photographed during one commute sitting up straight in a fur-trimmed coat and long lavender gloves. A sleek taupe tote sat politely on her lap, not beside her.

"I would never dream of putting my bag on the seat," the actress said during a recent interview during rehearsals of her new Broadway play. "You've got to leave room for other people."

Mirren seems a bit bewildered by all the fuss over her underground style, which Buzzfeed declared "the classiest thing to ever happen on the subway" and prompted InStyle to offer a shopping list inspired by her outfit.

She said she adores New York, even in the depths of winter: "I love it. I've got nice cozy boots, warm coat and hat and scarf." And on her decision to brave the city's public transport system, she didn't hesitate: "It's the quickest way to get around."

Mirren may be queen of the subway these days, but she's a monarch above ground, too. She's playing Queen Elizabeth II in the play "The Audience," which wowed crowds in London in 2013.

Peter Morgan's play imagines the private weekly meetings between the monarch and Britain's prime ministers over her six-decade reign, including Winston Churchill and Margaret Thatcher. It begins previews Tuesday at the Gerald Schoenfeld Theatre.

"It's about the clash of her being, on the one hand, the most visible woman in the world and, on the other hand, the most invisible woman in the world," said director Stephen Daldry. "Helen is extraordinary."

Mirren was initially reluctant to join the show since she'd already portrayed Queen Elizabeth II in the movie "The Queen," another Morgan-written story set after the 1997 death of Princess Diana.

"I didn't want to go back to her, I must say," Mirren said. "It felt as though I was going backward. And it's always a mistake for an actor to get overly identified with any particular character."

That changed somewhat when she read Morgan's clever script for "The Audience." He sent it to her to read, and she sent him a two-word email back: "You bastard."

Both projects have forced Mirren, who was raised in a "staunchly republican" family, to evolve her view of the monarchy. These days, she's not exactly a monarchist, but she calls herself a "queenist."

"I never really thought of the queen. She was just there, like Big Ben. You see it, but you don't really think about how it works," she said. "You just sort of see it and like that it's there."

Mirren's respect for the queen has burgeoned. "I just found I liked her more and more," she said. The actress thinks Elizabeth works hard and likely hates the dull paperwork and meetings associated with being monarch.

"She just wants to be walking across the moors with the dogs. She'd be very happy as a farmer's wife," Mirren said. "So that's her sentence—to be in palaces when actually she just wants to be in a muddy lane in a pair of Wellington boots and dogs running around."

The Broadway version of the play will have some actors from the West End run, but many will be American, including Judith Ivey as Thatcher and Dylan Baker as John Major. The playwright has changed a few things, including tweaking the David Cameron meeting and adding a whole new Tony Blair chat.

Mirren, who was acclaimed for her starring role in the TV detective series "Prime Suspect," isn't certain that her royal portrayal is perfectly accurate but stresses it's an interpretation.

"This is my portrait. And, in a way, there's as much of me in it as there is the queen," she said. "I'm the artist, and it's reflected obviously through my sensibility."

So far the queen herself hasn't said anything. Mirren and the monarch have met several times, and Queen Elizabeth II hasn't brought up any of her portrayals.

"I have to say, if she had mentioned it, I wouldn't tell you. But she didn't mention it, in fact," Mirren said. "But there is an understanding whenever we see each other."

AP

This undated file image released by Boneau/Bryan-Brown shows Helen Mirren as Queen Elizabeth II in a promotional photo for Peter Morgan's play "The Audience," directed by two-time Tony Award winner Stephen Daldry.

With Heartfelt Gratitude

We would like to express our sincere gratitude and deepest appreciation to all our relatives and friends for your thoughtful prayers, comforting words, kind deeds, and for your presence at the morning Daily Mass and Nightly Rosary in memory of our beloved Mom, Estefania. Thank you for your attendance at our Mom's Christian Burial.

Daily Mass at 6 a.m. is being offered at Kristo Rai until Sunday, February 22nd. Our Mom's 18th day finakpo combined with our Dad's, (Vicente S. Camacho) 35th death anniversary will be celebrated on Sunday, February 22.

You are in our thoughts and prayers as we humbly say, "THANK YOU" and "SI YUUS MAASE."

May God bless us all,

The Family of the late
Vicente S. and Estefania F. Camacho

50 shades of green: How studio roped men into seeing 'Grey'

AP
In this image released by Universal Pictures and Focus Features, Jamie Dornan, left, and Dakota Johnson appear in a scene from "Fifty Shades of Grey."

LOS ANGELES (AP)—When Universal bumped "Fifty Shades of Grey" from August 2014 to Valentine's Day, 2015, it seemed like a cheesy gimmick. Now that box office results are in, it's clear that was the most brilliant stroke of all.

The adaptation of author EL James' erotic novel debuted to an astounding $94.4 million domestic and $172 million international across the long President's Day weekend, breaking box office records for the month of February, female filmmakers and R-rated movies in what is proving to be a perfect storm of intrigue, brand, and crafty execution by Universal Pictures.

"Fifty Shades of Grey" was always expected to be a fruitful endeavor—that's why nearly every studio in town clamored to scoop up the rights to James' phenomenally successful trilogy in 2012. When Focus Features and parent company Universal were the lucky winners, the hype only intensified as fans hungered for everything from casting rumors, to first photos of stars Dakota Johnson and Jamie Dornan, and clues about what would make the final cut.

But fans alone don't explain a blockbuster debut, especially when the entire Northeast was battling severe winter storms.

Produced for a modest $40 million with no tested star-power in front of the camera, Universal and Focus were hedging their bets from the beginning, keeping costs reasonable and stoking the buzz machine with a coy marketing campaign playing on the interest of those who hadn't read the book.

Not only did it spark a culture-wide dialogue, it became an event movie centered on a single date: Valentine's Day.

"It follows in the tradition of the edgier, naughtier, so-called romance movies, and that paid off. Audiences like a good R-rated escape," said Paul Dergarabedian, senior media analyst for box office firm Rentrak, noting racy films like "Last Tango in Paris," "9 1/2 Weeks," and "Basic Instinct."

"Fifty Shades of Grey" is poised to surpass all of them.

"Certainly the fan base came out, but to reach these numbers, you have to go broader than the built-in audience," added Gitesh Pandya, editor of BoxOfficeGuru.com.

The somewhat random fact that Valentine's Day fell on a Saturday in 2015 was key: it ensured that interest would stay high for at least the first two days of theatrical release.

Day one would be for the die-hard fans. Day two would be for the couples.

"That was a shrewd move," said Pandya. "This is the one weekend of the entire year where men will see a film that they do not want to see. The other 51 weeks of the year are a little different."

Whereas most films with ardent fan bases drop off dramatically on day two, "Fifty Shades of Grey" grew. The first "Twilight" film fell 40.8 percent on its second day. "Fifty Shades" spiked 21 percent.

Nick Carpou, Universal's President of Domestic distribution sees the film as a resounding victory on all levels. He credited the "careful choice" of a release date and an enticing marketing campaign that emphasized "qualities of the piece that are universally accepted," such as romance.

"We overachieved in the South and the South Central and, interestingly, in the Northeast, which is weather challenged," said Carpou. "It's a very motivated audience base."

An estimated 68 percent of opening weekend audiences was female (that number was even higher on Friday night), with 42 percent under the age of 25-years-old for the R-rated film. Racially, an estimated 52 percent were Caucasian, 22 percent Hispanic, 15 percent African American, and seven percent Asian.

Still, moviegoers didn't seem to be thrilled with the results. According to market research firm CinemaScore, audiences gave the film a dismal C+ rating.

"I'm expecting very large declines and rapid erosion in the days and weeks to come. This is one that is not going to have much stamina going forward," said Pandya.

That said, Pandya does note that the way the movie is tracking internationally, it could ultimately make over $600 million worldwide.

"It's going to be remarkably profitable and I'm sure they're getting the next film up and running," he said.

Although director Sam Taylor-Johnson and Dornan have alluded to imminent sequels in interviews, Universal, who holds the rights to the trilogy, is staying mum on the topic. Any suggestions of planned shooting and release dates are just speculation at this point.

As for what comes next for this franchise, Pandya thinks that "Twilight" is a good comparison for the future of "Fifty Shades of Grey" and not just because James' book started out as "Twilight" fan fiction. The second film in the popular vampire series doubled the first film's opening weekend.

"Universal knows it has a franchise that is huge now, but can be made even bigger with future films if they play their cards right," he said.

But copycats should take note: The success of "Fifty Shades of Grey" does not necessarily mean that S&M is going to be a fixture in mainstream cinemas going forward.

"I don't think that this is going to open the floodgates to a lot more S&M movies. I think this worked not because it was some random S&M story. It was a popular book which happened to have this type of material," Pandya said. "This is a specific brand. It's one entity."

'It's My Party' singer-songwriter Lesley Gore dies at 68

NEW YORK (AP)—Singer-songwriter Lesley Gore, who topped the charts in 1963 at age 16 with her epic song of teenage angst, "It's My Party," and followed it up with the hits "Judy's Turn to Cry," and the feminist anthem "You Don't Own Me," died Monday. She was 68.

Gore, a nonsmoker, died of lung cancer at New York-Presbyterian Hospital in Manhattan, according to her partner of 33 years, Lois Sasson.

"She was a wonderful human being—caring, giving, a great feminist, great woman, great human being, great humanitarian," Sasson, a jewelry designer, told The Associated Press.

Brooklyn-born and New Jersey-raised, Gore was discovered by Quincy Jones as a teenager and signed to Mercury Records. She graduated from Sarah Lawrence College with a degree in English/American literature.

Gore's other hits include "She's A Fool," "Sunshine, Lollipops and Rainbows," which Marvin Hamlisch co-wrote, "That's the Way Boys Are" and "Maybe I Know." She co-wrote with her brother, Michael, the Academy Award-nominated "Out Here On My Own" from the film "Fame."

Gore

She sang at the 1964 T.A.M.I. Show in Santa Monica, California, alongside future Rock and Roll Hall of Famers like the James Brown and the Rolling Stones. Gore also played Catwoman's sidekick in the cult TV comedy "Batman."

"She was a serious artist that was way ahead of her time," said Ronnie Spector in a statement. "She had a certain sound. But you want to be able to do new things too, and it can be hard on an artist that is so identified with a specific sound. Although she wasn't in a girl group, Lesley was definitely a huge part of that era. But she continued to be creative, and kept looking ahead, and that's how I will remember her."

In a Facebook post, songwriter Neil Sedaka, who attended Gore's Sweet 16 birthday party, shared his thoughts: "She was a great person and a phenomenal talent, who had opened for me on many occasions. She recorded a few of my songs ("Magic Colors" and "Summer Symphony") and was a great songwriter in her own right. I'm glad I had the chance of knowing her."

In the 1990s, Gore co-wrote "My Secret Love" for Allison Anders' film "Grace of My Heart," released in 1996. A couple of years later, she appeared in "Smokey Joe's Cafe" on Broadway. Gore had been working on a stage version of her life with playwright Mark Hampton when she died.

In 2005, she released "Ever Since," her first album in 30 years, but was sure to revisit older hits in front of fans. "If I've learned anything in this business," she told The New York Times that year, "how stupid would it be not to do `It's My Party' when people come to hear it?"

She officially came out to the public when she hosted several episodes of the PBS series, "In The Life," which dealt with gay and lesbian issues.

During the 2012 presidential campaign, Gore turned "You Don't Own Me" into an online video public service announcement demanding reproductive rights which starred Lena Dunham and Tavi Gevinson, among others

In the last few years, she performed at Feinstein's at the Loews Regency in New York and, along with Spector and LaLa Brooks, headlined the "She's Got the Power" concert outdoors at Lincoln Center in 2012.

In addition to Sasson, Gore is survived by her brother and mother, Ronny. Services will be held on Thursday at the Frank E. Campbell funeral home on Madison Avenue.

Producers promise Oscar night filled with magic and song

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Lady Gaga. Jennifer Hudson. Common and John Legend. Adam Levine. Rita Ora. Tegan & Sara. Tim McGraw.

This isn't the lineup for an upcoming pop concert, but rather for Sunday's Academy Awards.

"We want to entertain," said Neil Meron, producing his third consecutive Oscar ceremony with Craig Zadan. "And there's no better entertainment than to do it with music."

Host Neil Patrick Harris will perform an original song by the Oscar-winning writers behind "Let It Go," the producers said. Called "Moving Pictures," the musical number will set a "subliminal theme" for the evening, Meron said.

"It really is celebratory about movies and yet it's kind of cheeky in a way," he said. "But yet it has a beautiful musical motif which... we integrate throughout the show as kind of a call-back theme."

Added Zadan: "We didn't want to do a musical number that could have been on the Tonys, or anywhere else for that matter."

"It's a multimedia musical number," he said, "something that we've not done before."

Music is part of the production pair's professional DNA, though. The two produced the "The Sound of Music" and "Peter Pan" live TV specials, as well as the movie musicals "Hairspray" and "Chicago," which won the best picture Oscar in 2003.

The producers said they started booking musical acts even before they learned the year's nominees. But they were delighted with the nominated original songs.

"We were smiled upon in that respect," Meron said.

A spate of stars will bring those songs to life on the Oscar stage.

Common and Legend are set to perform their song, "Glory," from "Selma." Levine will sing "Lost Stars" from "Begin Again." Ora will take on Diane Warren's song from "Beyond the Lights," "Grateful." Tegan & Sara will join with The Lonely Island for "The Lego Movie" song, "Everything is Awesome." McGraw will perform Glen Campbell's song "I'm Not Gonna Miss You," from the documentary about his struggle with Alzheimer's, "Glen Campbell... I'll Be Me."

The producers wouldn't say what Hudson, Gaga and other entertainers, including Jack Black and Anna Kendrick, will sing.

Suspense about their performances will have to stand in for the lack of suspense for most of the acting categories. Patricia Arquette of "Boyhood" and J.K. Simmons of "Whiplash" have locked up supporting-actor awards all season, and Julianne Moore is shoo-in for the best-actress Oscar for "Still Alice."

The lead actor competition has some excitement, with Michael Keaton of "Birdman" and Eddie Redmayne of "The Theory of Everything" splitting many of the early honors.

"Birdman" and "The Grand Budapest Hotel" lead all nominees with nine bids apiece, including best picture, director, cinematography and original screenplay. Also up for best picture are "American Sniper," "Boyhood," "The Imitation Game," "The Theory of Everything," "Selma" and "Whiplash."

Among the highlights of last year's top-rated ceremony was host Ellen DeGeneres' surprise pizza delivery and superstar-selfie moment. Meron and Zadan wouldn't say what antics are planned this year—if they're planned at all.

"Everyone thinks that we pre-planned the selfie and pizza thing exactly the way they happened last year, but we didn't!" Zadan insisted, detailing the various ways the bits could have gone wrong: "Nobody takes a piece of pizza, and then it's weird. Ellen is standing there with pizza."

But they do promise real magic on Oscar night. After all, host Harris is a magician.

Pharrell Williams has deal for 'Happy' picture book, 3 more

NEW YORK (AP)—Pharrell Williams has a "Happy" deal for a series of children's picture books.

The Grammy Award-winning performer has an agreement with Putnam Books for Young Readers for four picture books, starting with one inspired by his hit song "Happy."

Putnam announced Tuesday the book, "Happy," will be published Sept. 22 and will feature photographs of children from around the world "celebrating what it means to be happy." It plans a first printing of 250,000 copies.

Pharrell has won 10 Grammys, including two for "Happy."

"Happy" was featured on the soundtrack of "Despicable Me 2" and was an Oscar nominee last year for best song.

'Miss Saigon' triumphs at London's WhatsOnStage awards

LONDON (AP)—"Miss Saigon" and Shakespeare have triumphed at Britain's WhatsOnStage awards, as theatergoers rewarded seasoned shows, spectacle and star power.

"Miss Saigon" took nine trophies at Sunday's ceremony, whose winners were decided by public vote. It was named best musical and best West End show, took lead acting honors for stars Eva Noblezada and Jon Jon Briones and also netted prizes for supporting actor and actress, direction, choreography and design.

Producer Cameron Mackintosh said the prizes vindicated his decision to bring the show back to London in a new production, 25 years after its premiere.

"I've always said the public knows best," Mackintosh said.

A tragic Vietnam War love story that famously lands a real helicopter on the stage, "Miss Saigon" ran for a decade in London from 1989. On Broadway, it ran for 4,063 performances until 2000.

The new version opened in May to strong box office and positive reviews.

Mackintosh said it had been "wonderful to see ... a young audience coming and taking it as if it's a brand new musical."

And at a time when several new musicals have closed after relatively short London runs, Mackintosh said that the show's success "shows that a great musical play is actually timeless."

A Donmar Warehouse production of Shakespeare's bloody tragedy "Coriolanus" starring "Thor" screen baddie Tom Hiddleston took three prizes, including best revival of a play.

"Doctor Who" and "Broadchurch" star David Tennant was named best actor in a play for the Royal Shakespeare Company's "Richard II."

"These plays have been revived for 400 years, and there's no sign of that letting up," said Tennant, who has been cast as a comic-book villain in Netflix-produced Marvel drama "AKA Jessica Jones."

"It's the language that sings down the centuries."

The awards are sponsored by website whatsonstage.com.

Lady Gaga engaged to 'Chicago Fire' actor Taylor Kinney

AP

In this Dec. 7, 2014 file photo, Taylor Kinney and Lady Gaga attend the 37th Annual Kennedy Center Honors in Washington. Lady Gaga announced on her Instagram account Monday, Feb. 16, 2015 that she and Kinney are engaged.

NEW YORK (AP)—Lady Gaga is no longer caught in a bad romance: She's engaged to actor Taylor Kinney.

The pop star shared the news on her Instagram account Monday. She posted a photo of a ring on her finger and wrote: "He gave me his heart on Valentine's Day, and I said YES!"

Lady Gaga and Kinney met on the set of her "You & I" video in 2011. Kinney stars in the NBC series "Chicago Fire" and had a role in the film "Zero Dark Thirty."

Lady Gaga's hits include "Poker Face," "Bad Romance" and "Applause." She recently won her sixth Grammy Award, for her "Cheek to Cheek" album with Tony Bennett. She's scheduled to perform at Sunday's Academy Awards.

'SNL' 40th anniversary bash watched by 23 million viewers

NEW YORK (AP)—The Nielsen ratings company says NBC's "Saturday Night Live" 40th anniversary bash has drummed up a huge audience. Preliminary figures indicate Sunday's retrospective special was seen by 23.1 million viewers.

That makes it NBC's most-watched prime-time entertainment special since May 2004, when the network aired a "Friends" clips show the night of its series finale.

It's NBC's most-watched prime-time entertainment broadcast overall, excluding post-Super Bowl programs, since May 2004, for an episode of "ER" the night of the "Frasier" series finale.

The 3 1/2-hour special looked back on the comedy series' four-decade run and featured more than 80 guest stars.

Nielsen says the preceding one-hour red carpet special was seen by 11.1 million viewers.

Colleague's texts suggest she has more in mind than work

DEAR ABBY: My husband is a handsome executive who works out of town. I'm a professional with a responsible job that limits my ability to travel.

I needed to borrow his phone recently and noticed that one of his colleagues has been texting him after hours. She asks if he has traveled safely, tells him she misses him, how much she enjoys working with him—all with romantic emoticons. I'm concerned that the flattery and emoticons indicate she wants more than a work-based relationship. She's married with kids. How should I approach this?

WORRIED WIFE IN KENTUCKY

DEAR WORRIED WIFE: Because there have been more than one of these flirtatious, unbusinesslike communications, assume that your husband hasn't discouraged them. Confront him. Tell him you feel what she's doing is a threat to your marriage, and you want it stopped. But before you do, make copies of the texts so you can confront the woman with them if she doesn't stop.

■■■

DEAR ABBY: Is it OK for a man to talk on his cellphone at the urinal in a public restroom, or for a woman to talk on the phone while using the toilet in one of the stalls?

Also, please remind everyone to wash their hands after using the restroom.

RUSSELL IN RICHLAND, WASH.

DEAR RUSSELL: I can think of few things more unpleasant than conversing with someone with the sound of "running water" (or worse) in the background and toilets flushing. Why anyone would do this is beyond me. It's very rude.

And, while I can remind people about hand-washing until the cows come home, I'll suggest instead that men and women who use public restrooms not touch the door handle without a paper towel—when available—firmly in hand.

■■■

DEAR ABBY: I grew up in the '90s in a neighborhood where the kids respected their neighbors. I now live in a different state and, obviously, a different era. Neighborhood kids constantly use my steep driveway to ride their bicycles, tricycles and scooters without asking permission.

Am I right in thinking this is rude, because in my opinion, they are trespassing? Not only could I be held responsible if one of them gets hurt on my property, but they also are extremely loud and do this while my children are trying to nap. They have been asked to stop, and I have threatened to talk to their parents, even though I don't know where they live. What do I do?

FRUSTRATED HOMEOWNER

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

DEAR FRUSTRATED: Discuss this with your insurance broker. You are correct that if one of the children gets hurt on your property you could be liable. You also need to be more proactive than you have been. Tell the kids they are disturbing your children who are trying to nap, and if the kids don't go away, find out where they live and talk to the other parents. It would be cheaper than having to install a gate in front of your driveway.

■■■

To order "How to Write Letters for All Occasions," send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Letter Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. Shipping and handling are included in the price.

Pastimes

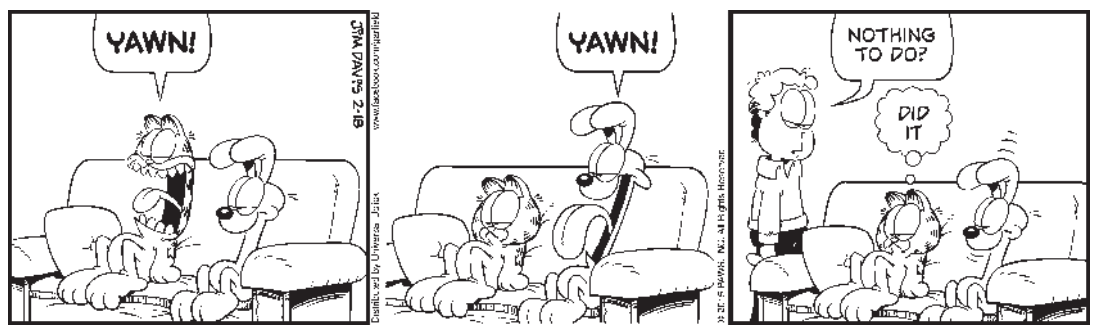
Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

GRAPHIC VIOLENCE IN THE MEDIA.
DOES IT GLAMORIZE VIOLENCE? SURE. DOES IT DESENSITIZE US TO VIOLENCE? OF COURSE. DOES IT HELP US TOLERATE VIOLENCE? YOU BET. DOES IT STUNT OUR EMPATHY FOR OUR FELLOW BEINGS? HECK YES.
DOES IT CAUSE VIOLENCE? ...WELL, THAT'S HARD TO PROVE.
THE TRICK IS TO ASK THE RIGHT QUESTION.

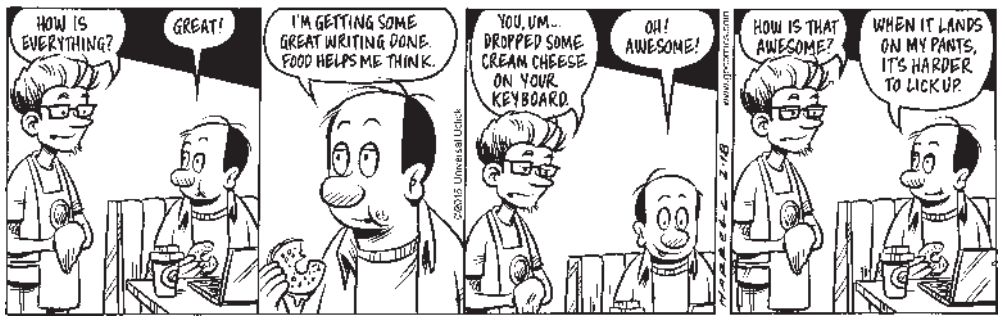
Garfield®

By Jim Davis



Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


HOW IS EVERYTHING?
GREAT!
I'M GETTING SOME GREAT WRITING DONE. FOOD HELPS ME THINK.
YOU, UM... DROPPED SOME CREAM CHEESE ON YOUR KEYBOARD.
OH! AWESOME!
HOW IS THAT AWESOME?
WHEN IT LANDS ON MY PANTS, IT'S HARDER TO LICK UP.

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

YOUR STUPID COOK MADE MY BURGER WRONG! I SAID NO PICKLES! I WANT ANOTHER ONE PRONTO, TONTO!
HEY, GARY! NUMBER SEVEN!
AND NO SPIT!
NUMBER EIGHT!

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 Possesses
5 Squirrel's treat
8 Con game
12 Harvest
13 Victoria's Secret item
14 Fit as a fiddle
15 Room
17 Long heroic tale
18 Cut drastically
19 Gumshoe
21 Uncategorized (Abbr.)
24 List-ending abbr.
25 Medics
28 Some retrievers, for short
30 Scenery chewer
33 "Selma" director DuVernay
34 Mafia bosses
35 Mid-afternoon, in a way
36 Pound sound
37 Apollo's instrument
38 Tackles' teammates
39 Vast expanse
41 Persia, now
43 Influenza
46 Crazed
50 Demolish
51 Largest living rodent
54 Writer James
55 Carnival city
56 Property claim
57 Nurse's handouts
58 Web address
59 Otherwise

DOWN
1 Folklore beasts
2 Whip mark
3 California wine valley
4 Twitches
5 Japanese sash
6 Illustrations
7 Knock-knock quartet
8 Bed linen
9 Monkey named for a monk
10 Oodles
11 Netting
16 Greek X
20 Not so much
22 Dispatch
23 Blue Grotto island
25 Rotation duration
26 Eggs
27 Overturned
29 Transvaal settler
31 Help
32 Wrong (Pref.)
34 Sound of thunder
38 Facilitate
40 Tools for duels
42 Actress Adams
43 Metric measure
44 Anger
45 Beige
47 Hammer target
48 Inflames
49 Prop for Dr. House
52 Melody
53 D.C. figure

Solution time: 23 mins.

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R	O	L	E	■	P	O	E	■	H	U	L	L
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S	H	E	E	P	■	B	S	M	I	■	■	■
H	E	A	R	■	M	A	L	A	Y	S	I	A
E	R	R	■	S	A	Y	I	T	■	P	O	I
M	A	L	A	P	R	O	P	■	W	A	N	D
■	■	■	B	A	K	U	■	S	E	N	S	E
B	L	O	O	M	S	■	S	K	I	■	■	■
L	A	M	A	■	M	A	L	A	R	K	E	Y
O	V	E	R	■	A	G	A	■	D	I	N	E
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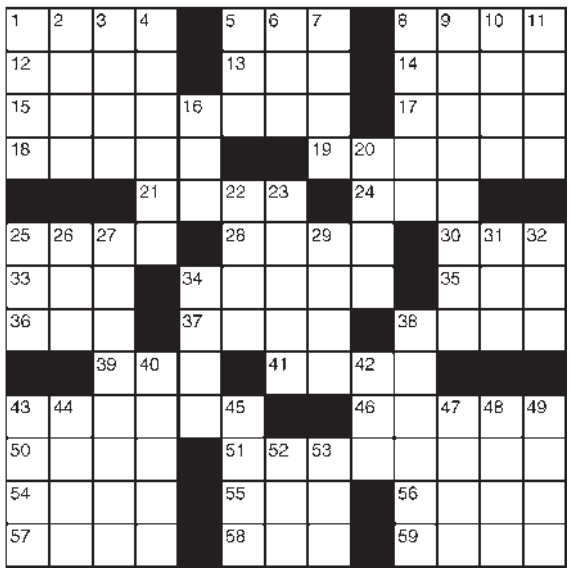
Yesterday's answer 2-18



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Shane Lyons, 27; Molly Ringwald, 47; John Travolta, 61; Yoko Ono, 82.

Happy Birthday: Don't shy away from something or someone you want in your life. You have good discipline, and if you use your intelligence, you will find a way to get what you want. Don't be daunted by setbacks or those who don't share your vision. Set your sights on what you want to achieve and don't stop until you reach your destination. Your numbers are 3, 14, 17, 22, 30, 37, 45.

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Show off your playful side. Socialize and get involved in activities that will help you expand your awareness and your physical and mental strength. Set goals and prepare to make positive changes to your attitude, your finances and your health. ✪✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Emotional problems will escalate if you disagree with an elder or a superior. Think twice before you take on something that you aren't prepared to compete with. Focus on honing your skills and don't waste your energy. ✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): Size up what you want to do and what you must do. Having a clear picture regarding what's expected of you will help you delegate your time accordingly. Showing your ability to do it all will lead to advancement. ✪✪✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): Don't let anyone dump added responsibilities in your lap. Uncertainty will result in loss, so if you are questioning a deal, read the fine print before you make a commitment. Put more time and effort into self-improvement instead of trying to change others.

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Plan activities that will challenge you mentally and physically. Love and romance are in the stars and will enhance your personal life if you offer affection to someone special. Your confidence will entice someone to partner with you. ✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Concentrate on partnerships and network at functions that are geared toward entrepreneurs. Taking a stance and following through with your plans will attract attention and help to stabilize your position among your peers. ✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Be careful not to disrupt your relationship with someone you need in your corner. Choose your words wisely and throw in compliments to ensure that you maintain the support you need to follow through with your plans. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Stick close to home and make the changes that will help you fulfill your creative needs. Love, romance and passion should be a top priority. Don't talk—take action and show how much you care. A unique lifestyle change will be beneficial. ✪✪✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Put your plans into motion. Say what's on your mind and follow through. The more concise you are, the easier it will be to avoid being misinterpreted or deceived. Positive changes at home or to your surroundings will give you fresh vision. ✪✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Choose to take a unique route or approach to something you do that can raise your income. It's how you display and present what you have to offer that will make the difference. An old partner will have something worthwhile to contribute. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Your impulsiveness will put you in an ideal position. A clear-cut view of the possibilities will make it easier for you to jump into action and take over. An important partnership will improve your chance to get ahead. ✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Don't leave anything to chance. Secrets will be revealed if you trust someone with personal information. Don't give anyone a reason to doubt you. Demands will be made if you are too accommodating. Don't make promises you will regret. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are opportunistic, sociable and popular. You are helpful and charitable.

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SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

	5	2				3	6	
9			6		5			7
			1					2
			7					4
		9					8	
			9					6
			2					3
7			4		6			5
	6	3				7	2	

Difficulty Level ★★★ 2/18

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

7	2	9	8	4	3	6	5	1
3	8	1	6	5	7	2	4	9
4	6	5	2	1	9	7	8	3
8	7	3	5	6	4	9	1	2
1	5	6	7	9	2	8	3	4
9	4	2	1	3	8	5	6	7
2	1	4	9	8	6	3	7	5
5	9	8	3	7	1	4	2	6
6	3	7	4	2	5	1	9	8

Difficulty Level ★★ 2/17

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

FIREFLIES Solution: 9 letters

E	L	W	S	G	U	L	S	I	R	U	T	O	H	P
A	A	O	I	N	E	L	L	O	P	M	H	W	I	H
N	N	D	M	N	I	G	B	C	A	S	C	O	B	O
I	R	A	I	A	G	A	R	T	T	O	T	R	E	T
L	U	H	N	D	R	E	E	E	H	F	A	R	R	I
O	I	S	O	K	O	S	D	L	M	T	H	U	N	N
I	D	N	E	E	R	G	H	T	C	E	U	Ⓑ	A	U
C	A	A	D	U	L	T	N	E	L	D	M	Ⓤ	T	S
U	R	A	I	S	A	B	N	E	S	L	I	Ⓖ	E	T
L	K	I	D	W	R	F	R	B	H	U	D	Ⓢ	C	H
A	S	E	N	O	M	O	R	E	H	P	M	E	P	T
R	G	G	W	L	O	E	M	I	T	G	S	M	R	W
V	G	N	Y	L	F	F	H	T	C	N	L	R	E	O
A	E	S	P	E	C	I	E	S	I	A	I	O	Y	R
E	L	A	M	Y	A	L	H	T	M	R	A	W	W	G

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Yesterday's Answer: Placement

Treasury 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18 or 19 can be purchased online at www.WonderWordBooks.com. (Contain 130 puzzles.)

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JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

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Applications can be obtained and submitted at L&T Group of Companies, Ltd. Human Resources Office located on the 2nd Floor, JP Center Building at Beach Road, Garapan. Salaries will commensurate with qualifications and experience. To be considered, applications must be submitted no later than 5:00pm, Monday, March 02, 2015.

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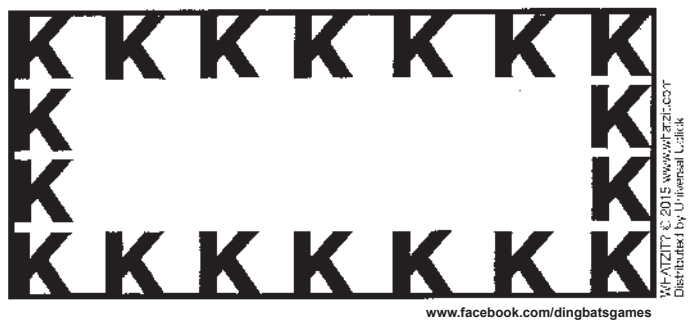

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Source: Stoudemire commits to Mavs after leaving Knicks

DALLAS (AP)—Amare Stoudemire asked out of his contract with the New York Knicks because he wants to make a run at a championship.

The veteran forward has apparently decided Dallas is the place to spend the rest of this season chasing his first title.

A person with direct knowledge of the talks said Monday night that Stoudemire has agreed to sign with the Mavericks after taking a buyout from the Knicks. He can't make his verbal commitment official until he clears waivers Wednesday.

The person, who spoke on condition of anonymity because the deal wasn't official, told The Associated Press that Stoudemire could be available when Dallas returns from the All-Star break Thursday at Oklahoma City.

The 32-year-old Stoudemire was waived Monday after requesting the Knicks buy out the remainder of his contract that was set to expire after this season. He's likely to clear waivers.

"I will be forever grateful for the opportunity to contribute positively on the court and in the community," Stoudemire said. "Although I leave the Knicks with a heavy heart, I wish the organization the best of luck. Once a Knick always a Knick."

Dallas has needed frontcourt help since trading Brandan Wright in a deal that brought point guard Rajon Rondo from Boston.

Stoudemire averaged 17.3 points and 6.7 rebounds in 255 games over five seasons with the Knicks, making the playoffs three times. He was a starter in the 2011 All-Star Game, the Knicks' first in 14 years.

"His time here should be marked by recognizing his effort. It was 100 percent," Phil Jackson, the Knicks' president of basketball operations, said in a statement. "As we move forward in structuring this team, we will look for players that exhibit his desire to win."

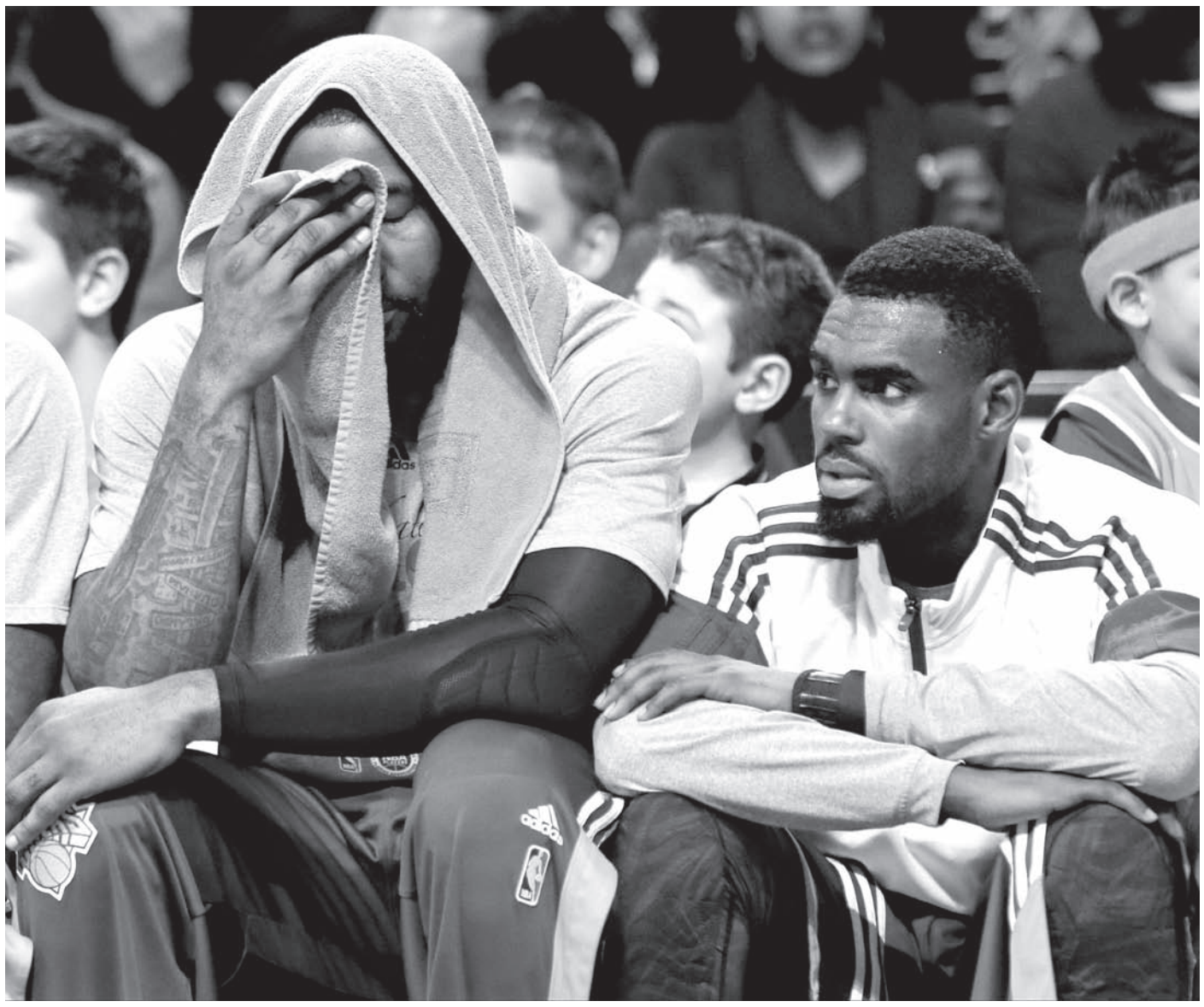
Carmelo Anthony, who wanted to play for the Knicks in part because Stoudemire had signed there in 2010, learned the news Sunday after playing in the All-Star Game.

"Amare brought something back to New York that New York was kind of missing and needing for a long time," Anthony said. "When he came, he brought back some of the excitement here for the game of basketball in New York. There was hope when he came back. People started believing in the New York Knicks once again. He was the main reason for that belief and for that hope when he first got here in New York."

Stoudemire was an All-Star in Phoenix before signing a five-year contract worth about $100 million in 2010. He helped the Knicks end a seven-year playoff drought his first season, but he missed significant time over the past few years because of assorted injuries. The Knicks had to monitor his minutes since his two knee operations during the 2012-13 season.

He can still score when able to play, averaging 12 points in 24 minutes this season.

"To see him leave, to see the situation where it's at right now, I know what he wants and you have to respect that," Anthony said. "As an athlete, as a competitor, you only want the best for your friends, your close ones. He wants to play for a championship is what I'm hearing. He wants to play for a contender. I don't think nobody should hold that away from him."



AP

New York Knicks' Amare Stoudemire, left, and Tim Hardaway Jr., right, watch their team play during the first half of an NBA basketball game against the Brooklyn Nets on Friday, Feb. 6, 2015, in New York.

Warriors, Hawks on top, LeBron set to chase when NBA resumes

NEW YORK (AP)—LeBron James isn't used to looking up at so many teams at the All-Star break.

The Golden State Warriors and Atlanta Hawks occupy his former perch atop the standings, and Stephen Curry and Paul Millsap think that's where their teams belong. The Western Conference is loaded as usual—so good that All-Star Game MVP Russell Westbrook wouldn't even be in the playoffs if they started now.

There are three teams between the Hawks and fifth-place Cleveland in the East, putting James in the rare position of chaser.

He can't wait to try.

"I'm excited. I'm excited what our team can accomplish," he said. "We entered the break playing some really, really good basketball; winning 14 of our last 16. I'm going to take these next couple of days off and get back in the gym on Wednesday a little bit, go hard on Thursday and get ready to play Washington on Friday."

The NBA has a longer midseason break than usual this season, with play not resuming until Friday. That gives Westbrook extra time to rest after pouring in 41 points Sunday in the West's 163-158 victory at Madison Square Garden.

His Oklahoma City Thunder have overcome injuries to he and Kevin Durant to win three straight, but they are still just outside the West's top eight. No such worries for the Warriors, who rolled into the break with a 42-9 record and an MVP candidate in Curry.

"It's fun right now. We have a great team that has aspirations this year. I think it's something that we're poised to go after," Curry said.

"You want to just embrace the higher expectations that we put on ourselves and that are surrounding our team. We talk about what we're trying to do this year. We want to back it up."

It won't be easy, with challenges throughout a rugged West where defending champion San Antonio will try to mount a charge from seventh place.

The East was widely expected to come down to Chicago and Cleveland, and maybe it still will. Besides the Cavaliers' strong run to the first-half finish, with James looking healthy and Kevin Love appearing more comfortable, the Bulls won their last four to surge into third place.

Neither is likely to catch the Hawks, who rode an undefeated January to a 43-11 record. Their balanced team play put four players in the All-Star Game, and in two months they can try to prove it would work in the postseason.

"I'm not going to look too far ahead," Millsap said. "We're going to try to take care of the regular season first, but we feel like there's still room for improvement. We still feel like we haven't played our best basketball. It's shocking to say, but we feel like we can still get better and still have a lot to work on."

Silver seeking 'dramatic' improvements in NBA scheduling

NEW YORK (AP)—Commissioner Adam Silver is determined to make a schedule that keeps NBA players fresher, and he is willing to discuss starting the season earlier or ending later.

Change could come as early as next season, with fewer stretches of games on back-to-back nights, or four in five nights. He said Saturday during his All-Star press conference that he is concerned with the wear and tear on players.

Silver believes the league can make "dramatic" improvements in those areas.

"We hear everyone loud and clearly," Silver said. "Certainly our players and our teams, that there's nothing more important than the health and welfare of our players. And ultimately we want to see players getting appropriate rest and playing at the highest level."

Just beginning his second year in charge, Silver said his priority is improving the game, whereas much of his early successes were on off-the-court areas.

But business couldn't completely be ignored, with Silver acknowledging the league and players association are early in discussions about how to handle to the influx of revenue coming when the new TV deals kick in in 2016.

The union rejected the league's first proposal for how to set a salary cap number the previous season so it didn't vault too high the following year.

Silver made a schedule tweak this season by lengthening the All-Star break, addressing one concern from players. But that in some cases created more situations where teams had to play four games in five nights during other stretches of the seasons.

He wants to work on that next.

"One of the things we're hoping to address, even for next season, is to come as close as possible as we can to eliminating the four games out of five nights," Silver said. "It's a math formula at the end of the day in terms of the number of days we play, but we think we can make a dramatic reduction there."

Training camps traditionally open around Oct. 1 and the regular season starts just before Halloween. Silver said coaches would like to keep enough time for camp but perhaps don't have the same need for as many preseason games, which could allow the regular-season opener to move up.

Ending the season later—the draft is usually the last week of June and free agency opens July 1—may not be as easy, but Silver won't rule it out.

"Generally the view has been—in addition it just feels out of sync once you get into the summer—historically those nights haven't been viewed as the best television nights, once you get into July, and just in terms of households watching TV," he said.

"I will say maybe that's something we should look at, too. If we're truly going to take a fresh look at this, we have to examine what the appropriate time is to begin the season and when we should end it."

The desire to improve the schedule could hinder a review of the playoff format, another interest of Silver's. Currently the top eight teams in each conference make the playoffs, meaning some teams in the Western Conference will miss out this year despite better records than East playoff squads. Silver would like to find a way to get those teams in and has been receiving proposals.

He thinks East owners would consider it for the sake of improving the product, but there are other concerns.

"I think it's a difficult issue, because there are no perfect solutions," Silver said. "And on one hand to the extent you increase the amount of travel, it goes directly against my first issue on reducing wear and tear on our players, and ensuring that on any given night our players are playing at the optimum level."

He did say that he believes a lottery tweak is still necessary after a proposal to change it last fall fell short. And he wants the NBA, along with USA Basketball, to help improve youth basketball.

"My focus is on the game," Silver said. "It's a fantastic game, it's a great game. But that's an aspect I believe we can improve."

Lance Armstrong loses $10M arbitration ruling

AUSTIN, Texas (AP)—An arbitration panel ordered Lance Armstrong and Tailwind Sports Corp. to pay $10 million in a fraud dispute with a promotions company for what it called an "unparalleled pageant of international perjury, fraud and conspiracy" that covered up his use of performance-enhancing drugs.

Dallas-based SCA Promotions announced the 2-1 decision against the former cyclist when its lawyers said Monday they had asked Texas' 116th Civil District Court in Dallas to confirm the arbitration ruling, dated Feb. 4. The panel included a neutral chairman, who ruled in favor of SCA, and one person selected by each side.

Tim Herman, a lawyer for Armstrong, insisted the ruling is contrary to Texas law and predicted it will be overturned by a judge.

SCA paid Armstrong and Tailwind, the since-dissolved team management company, about $12 million in bonuses during Armstrong's career, when he won seven Tour de France titles. Those victories were stripped after Armstrong and his U.S. Postal Service teams were found to have used banned performance-enhancing drugs.

SCA disputed the bonuses in arbitration in 2005, and the case produced the foundation of the doping evidence later used against him. Despite allegations of cheating, Armstrong continued to deny doping and the company settled with Armstrong and paid him $7 million in 2006.

AP

In this Aug. 29, 2012 file photo, Lance Armstrong speaks to delegates at the World Cancer Congress in Montreal. A

The company sued Armstrong to get its money back after Armstrong's cheating was exposed by a report from the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency and a televised confession interview with Oprah Winfrey.

The case was sent back to the original arbitration panel of independent chairman Richard Faulkner, SCA selection Richard Chernick and Armstrong pick Ted Lyon.

In the 2005 arbitration hearings, Armstrong testified under oath that he did not use performance-enhancing drugs.

"Perjury must never be profitable," the majority wrote in the new decision. "Tailwind Sports Corp. and Lance Armstrong have justly earned wide public condemnation. That is an inadequate deterrent. Deception demands real, meaningful sanctions."

SCA President and founder Bob Hamman praised the ruling.

"It is hard to describe how much harm Lance Armstrong's web of lies caused SCA but this is a good first start toward repairing that damage," Hamman said.

Armstrong argued his original settlement could not be overturned under state law. The arbitration majority said the $10 million was a penalty for Armstrong's lying and efforts to intimidate or coerce witnesses in the previous case.

"This award is unprecedented," Herman said.

Herman noted Lyon's dissent said the panel was not deceived in the original settlement when it signed off on a voluntary agreement entered by SCA.

"There is no Texas case or statute that allows for this type of sanctions motion nine years after the award was given," Lyon wrote in his dissent.

Lyon's dissent also attacked SCA, writing that in 2005 the arbitration panel had found the company to have engaged in selling insurance in Texas without a license, which could have exposed it to more than $22 million in damages under Armstrong's original claims.

"No party in this case came here with clean hands," Lyon wrote.

"The final decision by the panel reminds me about the `do right rule.' It doesn't matter what the law is, let's just do what is right," Lyon wrote. "Arbitrators, like judges, don't have that luxury, and the Panel exceeded its authority by indulging itself here."

Armstrong also is being sued by the federal government and former teammate Floyd Landis in a whistleblower fraud action over his team's sponsorship contract with the Postal Service. That case is not set to go to trial before 2016.

It's official—All-Star Game to be played in Miami in 2017

MIAMI (AP)—The Miami Marlins held a festive news conference Friday in anticipation of hosting the 2017 All-Star Game, with a color guard, video highlights, a speech by Gov. Rick Scott and the introduction of more than half a dozen former All-Stars with ties to the team.

"Miami is a city that knows how to celebrate," baseball Commissioner Rob Manfred observed.

Manfred's announcement at Marlins Park confirmed the site of the 2017 game, and the occasion had a celebratory tone because it was a long time coming.

The Marlins started play in 1993 and two years later were awarded the 2000 All-Star Game at Pro Player Stadium. But after founding owner Wayne Huizenga dismantled the roster of at team's 1997 World Series champions, Major League Baseball took away the game in 1998 and awarded it to Atlanta.

Marlins Park opened in 2012, and the team appears to be on an upswing following a busy offseason.

"The `97 decision was somebody else's decision," said Manfred, who replaced Bud Selig as commissioner three weeks ago. "All I'm going to say is we're thrilled to have awarded the 2017 All-Star Game to the Marlins. ... It was time for baseball to recognize and pay back South Florida for what they did in building this stadium."

Team owner Jeffrey Loria has attracted plenty of criticism for his team's stadium deal, small payrolls and frequent roster purging. But he won praise for signing NL home run champion Giancarlo Stanton to a record $325 million, 13-year contract in November, and there's increased interest in the team, which has finished last in the NL in attendance in nine of the past 10 years.

"I'm optimistic about baseball in Miami," Manfred said. "You have a great facility. They have a great young team. And I think this market will support a winner."

Loria said he was gratified the All-Star Game will come to Miami in the franchise's 25th season.

"It's baseball's recognition that you're doing good things," Loria said. "You don't get to the top unless you have ups and downs. You have to take the criticism and take the good with the bad. I'm still here, and I'm still here, and I'm still here, because I believed in what we were doing along the way."

About 200 people gathered on the left-field plaza overlooking downtown and a sunplashed field for Manfred's announcement. The audience included Stanton and ace Jose Fernandez, both former All-Stars; Jack McKeon, who managed the NL All-Star team in 2004; and Marlins executive Jeff Conine, the All-Star MVP in 1995.

Also attending were ex-Marlins Gary Sheffield, Mike Lowell, Luis Castillo, Charles Johnson, Alex Gonzalez and Cliff Floyd, all former All-Stars. Scott visited privately before the news conference with Stanton and Fernandez.

AP

Miami Marlins owner Jeffrey Loria , left, and David Samson, President of the Marlins listen as baseball Commissioner Robert Manfred Jr., right, announces the 2017 All-Star Game will be held in Miami during a press conference, Friday, Feb. 13, 2015, at the Miami Marlins ball park in Miami.

SIDEBAR

Jason Giambi retires after 20 seasons in majors

CLEVELAND (AP)—Jason Giambi is retiring after 20 seasons in the majors.

The 2000 AL MVP announced his decision Monday in a statement that was first sent to the *New York Daily News*. He ends his career as one of 20 players in history with at least 400 home runs, 1,400 RBIs, 1,200 runs and 1,300 walks. The 44-year-old played for Oakland, the New York Yankees, Colorado and Cleveland.

Following last season, Giambi said he would discuss with his family whether to keep playing. The longtime slugger appeared in just 26 games for the Indians in 2014.

A five-time All-Star and fearsome power hitter, Giambi batted .277 in his career with 440 home runs and 1,441 RBIs. He had a .399 on-base percentage and slugged .516.

The first baseman was also tarnished by his involvement in the BALCO performance-enhancing drugs investigation. He never publicly admitted using PEDs, but has apologized for past actions.

"I want to thank the fans for being a part of this incredible journey," Giambi said in his statement. "I especially want to thank the fans that gave me a second chance to let me show you the human being you see today."

Despite the PED scandal, Giambi remained a popular and well-respected player in clubhouses around the majors—especially his own. Before joining the Indians in 2013, he was a finalist for Colorado's managerial job.

Indians President Mark Shapiro tweeted, "An honor to have had G in the Tribe. A generous, wise spirit with so much to offer. True pro."

In his statement, Giambi also thanked everyone from his family and agents to the media, his managers and coaches—even the companies that supplied his baseball equipment.

"Ever since I was 5 years old, all I ever wanted to be was a Major League Baseball player," he said. "To the game of baseball: I started playing you when I was a kid and I'm leaving you a man. Thank you."

Blue Haus sweeps regular season

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Blue Haus earned a perfect record in the regular season of the 2015 Graphics Invitational Masters Basketball League following a 98-73 demolition of the Boomers last Friday night at the Gillette Multipurpose Gymnasium.

Blue Haus finished the round-robin league with a 6-0 record to gain the top seeding and the automatic semis slot in the seven-team competition.

The 25-point winning margin against the Boomers was Blue Haus' second biggest in the season behind their 47-point spread over Saipan Warriors, 117-70. In six games, the top finisher's average winning margin was 24 as it won by double figures against five teams. Blue Haus defeated Bammy's by 12, 82-70; 16 against Armatech, 88-72; and 20 over the Slashers, 81-61. Only KB Hite gave Blue Haus a tough fight in the regular season, losing by only 8 points, 90-98.

Against the winless Boomers (0-5), Blue Haus seemed headed for another blowout when it built an early double-digit advantage at the end of the first period, 25-13. Tony Diaz anchored Blue Haus' strong start, drilling 10 points in the first quarter, just one field goal short of matching the baskets of the entire Boomers' crew.

Despite the promising lead, Blue Haus kept piling up points in the second period, exploding for 34 markers—its biggest in the game—to open a commanding 59-30 advantage.

Ernie Moises picked up where Diaz left off in the second canto, scoring 13 points in the breakaway, while the rest of his teammates provided enough support to bury the Boomers.

The Boomers slightly made a headway in the third period, outgunning Blue Haus by 8, 26-18, but that was not enough to spark a major comeback, as Diaz finished the job, scoring 9 more markers in the final canto.

Diaz and Moises combined for more than half of Blue Haus' total output with the latter firing 30 points and the former adding 25. Sam Fernandez and Junar Guiab also finished in double figures with 14 and 12, respectively.

Dindo Pablo had 17 points to lead Boomers, which has to pull off an upset against the No. 2 rank squad (either Armatech or KB Hite) to make it to the semifinals. Dennis Cortez added 15, Mico Usi contributed 11, and Arman Anasan tallied 10.

Blue Haus 98 – Moises 30, Diaz 25, Fernandez 14, Guiab 12, Valencia 6, Buenabajo 2, Factor 1.

Boomers 73 – Pablo 17, Cortez 15, Usi 11, Anasan 10, Echavez 4, Salazar 4, Dela Cruz 2, Buniag 2.

Scoring by quarters: 25-13, 59-30, 77-56, 98-73.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Blue Haus' Junar Guiab attempts a reverse layup against KB Hite's Art Montes during last week's game in the 2015 Graphics Invitational Masters Basketball League at the Gillette Multipurpose Gymnasium.

MHS favorite to repeat in MISO caging

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

Marianas High School could be on its way to successfully defending its Marianas Interscholastic Sports Organization Boys Basketball League title this season, if no other team could stop the rampaging Dolphins anytime soon.

The defending champion Dolphins booked their 10th straight win, an 82-44 crushing of the Saipan International School Geckos last Thursday at the MHS Gymnasium.

They were playing the Mt. Carmel School Knights at press time, which is the same team they dealt a 57-27 beating last month.

The Dolphins, already assured of the top seeding in the double-elimination round finals, close out their campaign against winless Marianas Baptist Academy today.

JON PEREZ
Marianas High School junior varsity player Melvin Deocares looses ball possession while attempting to go for a layup in an earlier game against Saipan Southern High School JV in the Marianas Interscholastic Sports Organization Boys Basketball League.

Mikell Arciaga scattered 17 points and DJay Ong finished with 15 to lead MHS to the easy win against SIS

Ethan Manalili also tallied 15 markers and fired three straight 3-pointers to help the Dolphins enjoy a 25-9 lead after 10 minutes of play.

MHS has been averaging 72.9 points per game, while holding opponents to only 37.8 markers per contest for an average winning margin of 35.1.

MHS has scored the most points in a game against Saipan Southern High School, an 87-56 triumph on Jan. 14, and posted the largest-winning margin of 54 over Grace Christian Academy, 74-20, on Jan. 7.

The Dolphins held the Geckos to the lowest point total this season at 19, while having the least-winning margin of 12 against the Manta Rays, 75-63, on Feb. 10.

MHS last won back-to-back titles in 2009 and 2010. The Kagman High School Ayuyus foiled the Dolphins' three-peat bid in 2011, while Tinian High School, which only joins the double-elimination round final tournament, ruled the roost in 2012.

The Dolphins regained the crown in 2013 thanks to Mike Arciaga's putback to escape with a 37-36 decision against the Ayuyus.

In other Thursday games, SSHS breezed through a 57-29 win over MHS in an all-junior varsity match, while Kagman squeezed out a 61-59 decision against GCA in the other varsity match up.

First Game

SSHS JV 57 – Taitano 18, Tekopua 8, Alipio 6, Cruz 6, Aque 4, Borromeo 4, Siech 4, Esmundo 3.

MHS JV 29 – Dancoe 18, Cristobal 4, Bucayo 2, Deocares 2, Ellama 2, Miller 1.

Scoring by quarters: 17-9, 31-14, 42-20, 57-29.

Second Game

MHS 82 – Arciaga 17, Manalili 15, Ong 15, Espinosa 10, Malonzo 10, Factor 9, Mendoza 4, De Leon 2.

SIS 44 – Johnson 10, A. Cepeda 9, H.H. Kim 9, C. Cepeda 8, Y.K. Kim 2, Park 2, Ramsey 2, Smith 2.

Scoring by quarters: 25-9, 37-18, 53-37, 82-44.

Third Game

KHS 61 – Palino 24, Muna 18, Faisao 10, Torres 6, Lizama 3.

GCA 59 – Lee 18, W. Yu 13, Hinson 12, H. Yu 11, Hong 5.

Scoring by quarters: 17-9, 23-24, 38-35, 61-59.

YANKEES

From Page 28

headed for their first win when they scored nine runs in the first inning. They made five quick runs forcing the Yankees to call in Jared Camacho to replace Carl Camacho.

The game was close heading into the bottom of the eighth, with the Yankees holding on to a 22-20 lead. The Yanks then scored eight runs in the eighth, while John Tudela had some anxious moments on the mound before preserving the win in the ninth.

Tudela walked Jets lead off batter A.J. Evangelista, who stole second and moved to third on a balk before being stranded for a while after James Benavente grounded out to Pete Tomokane and Anthony David striking out.

Evangelista touched home plate on a Davie Matagolai RBI single. The Jets put two more runners on base after Jess Mesa was safe on first on a Chris Alepuyo fielding error and Tudela walking Palmero Monkeya to load up the bases.

But Tudela ended the Jets' slim chances of making a comeback when he struck out Perry Tudela.

Batting leader Gary Cruz went 5-for-7 with three runs and four RBIs, while Robert Bansil, 3-for-5, scored four times and had three RBIs including a two-RBI triple in the first inning. Jerome Delos Santos, 4-for-6 had three runs and three RBIs.

Alepuyo also had a two-RBI triple in a 2-for-4 performance at the plate with three runs and Brian Camacho went 3-for-5 with three runs and two RBIs, including an RBI double in the Yankees' six-run second inning.

John Tudela pitched the last four innings, giving up two earned runs on five hits while striking out five and walking four.

On Friday, Anthony Tenorio fanned nine and K.J. Villagomez drove in three runs in the Fielders' 16-9 victory over the Jets.

RINTARO

From Page 28

round-robin 40-and-over singles, holding an unbeaten record in three games. He won over Eric Abragan, 6-2, 4-6, 10-3, downed Gary Ramsey, 6-4, 6-7, 10-3, and secured the division crown following a walkover victory versus Randy Steele last Monday.

Abragan settled for the runner-up honors following his 4-6, 7-5, 12-10 triumph also last Monday over Ramsey, who rounded out the Top 3 with his 6-2, 7-5 win against Steele earlier.

In the boys U10 singles, which also used a round-robin format, Seung Jin Baek bested three other players.

Baek sealed the division crown after slipping past Daniel Kang last Monday, 6-4. Both Baek and Kang were unbeaten coming into to the title-deciding match with the former shutting down Richard Steele, 6-0, and dominating Anthony Gregoire, 6-3. Kang had a similar 6-3 triumph over Gregoire and topped Steele, 6-2. Steele saved third place in the division with his 6-4 win against Gregoire.

SENSYU U

From Page 28

CNMI players made repeated attempts to score. Sean Perez and Joe Miller each had one clear attempt but the former's was way off right and the latter's was off to left. They had a few more tries midway in the second half, but was foiled repeatedly as either their defenders blocked the ball or goalie Shunsuke Subue was there for the save.

Back-to-back handballs ended the CNMI's drought in the second half with Miller, who earlier overshot (way pass the top of the goal) his target off a pass from Scott Kim at the corner, converting the penalty kick in the 80th minute. However, Sensyu got the one goal back in the stoppage time (92nd) also off a penalty kick with Joel Fruit caught charging from the back and hitting Fujiyama, who fell down and got tangled up with CNMI goalie Joshua Galarion. Galarion came in for Ethan Dickinson early in the second half and made a couple of saves.

After the win, selection coach Satoru Takahashi gave credit to his players' familiarity with each other. "They've been playing together for two years so that's the reason they knew each other well and have been good in passing the ball," Takahashi said.

As for the CNMI side, Takahashi said the players are physically tough and play no let up on defense. He also mentioned Perez as one of the good players on the squad, saying the forward is fast and very aggressive on offense.

2015 Coconut Tennis Classic

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Ji Min Woo goes for a backhand return to Rintaro Miyawaki during their boys U12 title match in the 2015 Coconut Tennis Classic last Sunday at the American Memorial Park tennis courts.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Tiara Imai gets ready to serve.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Luther Lizama attempts a backhand return to Colin Ramsey during their boys U18 title game.

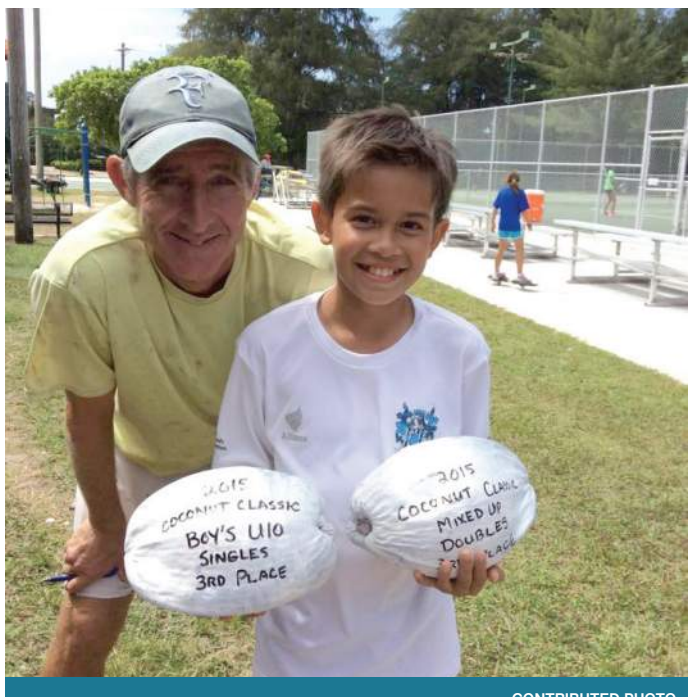
ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Luke Beling practices a return near the net during a warm-up before the mixed-up doubles finals.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Colin Ramsey goes for a forehand return to Luther Lizama during their boys U18 title game.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Steven Goodwin, left, and Allan Lee meet at the net before starting their match in the boys U14 singles.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Negahr Rastguiy receives a strong serve from Carol Lee during their girls U18 singles tiff.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Peter Loken makes a baseline return during a mixed-up doubles elimination game.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Richard Steele poses with his third place awards in the boys U10 and mixed-up doubles and is joined for a photo by teammate and coach Jeff Race.

Source: Stoudemire commits to Mavs after leaving Knicks

PAGE 24

Saipan Tribune
Sports

Blue Haus sweeps regular season

PAGE 26

Rintaro wins debut in U12 singles

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Multi-sport athlete Rintaro Miyawaki had a triumphant debut in boys U12 singles event of the 2015 Coconut Tennis Classic.

Miyawaki, who is also into soccer and swimming, moved up to a higher age group after topping the U10 singles event of the same tournament last season and bagged this year's U12 division crown following a finals sweep against Ji Min Woo, 6-4, 6-2, last Monday at the American Memorial Park tennis courts.

Counting his victory over Woo, Miyawaki got three wins en route to ruling the eight-player field. He started out his title bid in the division with a tough 3-6, 6-4, 19-17 win over Eugene Park in the quarterfinals of the lower half bracket. Then in the semis, Miyawaki had an easier time against Eubin Park, as the former took the first set, 6-0, and was awarded the win after the latter retired just before the start of the second set.

At the bottom half of the bracket, Woo made it to the finals following a 6-0, 2-6, 10-8 upset over the top-seeded Jamin Elliot. Woo and Elliot arranged their semis showdown after beating Chris Kim, 6-2, 6-3, and Brian Kim, 6-4, 4-6, 10-7, in the quarterfinals, respectively.

Meanwhile, Nicky Nichols and Seung Jin Baek completed the champions' list in the men's division singles contests.

Nichols prevailed in the

See RINTARO on Page 26

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Rintaro Miwayaki makes a baseline return to Ji Min Woo during their boys U12 singles title match in the 2015 Coconut Tennis Classic last Monday at the American Memorial Park tennis courts.

Yankees survive hit parade with Jets

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

The Saipan Stevedore Yankees survived a hit parade against the Jets and completed a wild 29-21 win on Wednesday night in the 2015 Saipan Baseball League at the Francisco M. "Tan Ko" Palacios Baseball Field.

The Yankees, after dropping a 9-6 decision against the defending champion GSM Brewers on Jan. 30, won three straight games including an 8-5 triumph over 2007 titlist Falcons last week.

The Yankees closed out the first round with a 4-1 card, while the Jets dropped all five games. Both bullpens also combined for 45 hits and 19 earned runs.

The Jets actually looked

See YANKEES on Page 26

JON PEREZ
A Saipan Stevedore Yankees batter watches the flight of the ball in their game against the North Starz last month. The Yankees closed out the first round after outlasting the Jets, 29-21, last Wednesday night in the 2015 Saipan Baseball League at the Francisco M. "Tan Ko" Palacios Baseball Field.

Sensyu U beats CNMI training pool, 5-2

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

A selection from Sensyu University defeated the training pool of the CNMI Men's National Team, 5-2, in an exhibition game yesterday at the Oleai Sports Complex Field.

The visiting team used its short, but accurate passing to have more scoring opportunities against the Commonwealth players, who fired blanks as Sensyu University was also quick on defense, frustrating the host's attackers.

With Sensyu University players knowing when, where, and how to pass the ball, they lit up the board four times in the first half. Shingo Kasai started the visiting squad's scoring with his shot in the 10th minute and then made an assist to Tomoki Fujiyama for their second goal (22nd) and the lead, 2-1.

The CNMI hit the board earlier than Sensyu University off Joe Miller's penalty shot in the fifth minute. However, the host team's hold on the driver's seat did not last long, as Sensyu began playing as a team with their impressive passing and ball control.

Sensyu went on to score to more goals in the first half after grabbing the lead off Eisuke Nakagawa's shot in the 23rd minute and Keisuke Kimura's hit 10 minutes later.

In the second half, Sensyu slowed down a bit, but still continued showing good passes, while the

See SENSYU U on Page 26

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Sensyu University's Keisuke Kimura, right, receives a pass from his teammate, while the CNMI's Scott Kim looks on during the second half of their exhibition game yesterday at the Oleai Sports Complex Field.